



Lifestyle
Old State House in
Boston full of history **A3**



Sports
Shawsheen wrestlers capture
Div. 1 team title **B5W**

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Rotary presents check to Angel Fund for ALS Research

Members of the Wilmington Rotary Club recently presented a donation to The Angel Fund for ALS Research Founding Director Eugene Nigro, right. Rotarian Mike Burns, third from right, a member of The Angel Fund's Advisory Committee, joined in the presentation. The donation represents the proceeds from the organization's annual Ice Bucket Challenge. (Courtesy photo)

Competency determination update for WHS

By **LIZZY HILL**
News Correspondent

WILMINGTON — Assistant Superintendent Christine Elliott premiered new information regarding competency determinations at the high school for the School Committee at their Feb. 12 meeting.

She explained that a subcommittee had been formed by English/Language Arts Curriculum Team Leader Mia Parviainen, Out of District Team Chair Heidi Sandler, and interim Director of Student Services Christine Murray who collectively created a recommendation.

Elliott also reminded the committee that as a result of ballot question two from

the fall 2024 election, language about competency determination must be changed. The previous competency determination language in the law stated that the decision could be made based on whether the student passes three subtests of MCAS in 10th grade.

With the vote, passing MCAS could no longer be used as the basis for competency determination which enables a student to graduate high school.

"I'd guess that the reason this question passed is because people recognized that not everyone performs well on standardized tests, and they want students to have the ability to demonstrate their

mastery of skills in another way," she continued.

Instead, each Massachusetts school district was given the charge to determine and document the criteria for a competency determination through an official policy. While MCAS could be a graduation requirement, it could not be part of the competency determination.

The policy and criteria for a competency decision must establish local requirements for students to earn the competency decision according to the new state laws, establish pathways for students graduating in 2025 and 2026 who didn't pass the competency

COMPETENT | PAGE A7W

School Committee receives high school, SEEM reports

By **LIZZY HILL**
News Correspondent

WILMINGTON — The School Committee received reports from their high school representative and the superintendent at their Feb. 12 meeting.

High School representative Shubhangi Tripathi shared extracurricular updates including Environmental Club's anti-idling initiative, WHS Service Council's Reader Leaders program, Soundscape singing in an international competition, WHS Lamp-lighters rehearsing Haddestown, Robotics Team qualifying for the state competition, Chess Club hosting a program in partnership with the library, and events held by World Cultures Club and Asian Heritage Club.

Among the sports updates were the boys basketball team ranking 14th in the league, girls basketball player Eva Boudreau reaching 1,000 career points, the hockey team hosting a veterans' game, and boys swimmer Cole Falk winning the 100 butterfly race at sectionals.

The committee also received a request for an international field trip for June of 2026. High school math teachers Kyra McDermott and Taejasvi Andrade shared their plans for the trip through EF including safety measures such as 24/7 emergency support, liability insurance, and background checks for the adults attending.

The trip would last nine days with visits in Munich, Salzburg, Vienna, Bratislava, and Budapest. The date window would begin June 27 and end on July 11.

The cost of \$3,799 for students includes airfare, hotels, daily dinner and breakfast, a 24/7 tour director, transportation, local guides, tickets for museums and sites, and global travel protection.

Families were expected to also provide money for passports, baggage fees, tips for the

local guides, lunches, and any snacks. Optional extra trip insurance could be purchased.

Students could pay by manual or automatic payment plans in full, bi-weekly \$116, or monthly \$232. They were also invited to apply for a scholarship through EF or use a fundraising page. McDermott provided they researched other hosting companies but found EF offered the best price.

Stephen Turner reminded the pair that this was still a significant trip and a fantastic part of the WHS program, but personally he wanted to see more cost-effective trips to closer locations or shorter trips for students who can't afford these more costly trips.

McDermott answered that they were starting to discuss domestic trips with EF, but there was nothing in the works. However, they knew there was continued interest in Europe trips.

Nicholas Golden asked how students would be prepared to visit the concentration camp. The math teachers explained that they would watch The Sound of Music in advance and prepare the students for what they were about to see.

David Ragsdale commented with appreciation for their efforts spent researching to keep costs down. He also suggested that they be thoughtful about opening registration with enough time for families who can't attend the registration meeting to learn information before they decide to register.

They agreed that they wanted to communicate better, and they would place students who had gone with them on their previous Greece trip on the waitlist to ensure preference is given to new students. The trip would be limited to students who would at that time be 11th and 12th graders.

The committee approved the field trip request.

Superintendent Dr. **SCHOOL | PAGE A7W**

Glenn Brand's report that night pertained to the annual SEEM Collaborative report, audit, and fiscal year 2026 budget. Brand stated that Wilmington's participation in the SEEM Collaborative provides benefits that expand beyond support and assistance for special needs students into professional development and more.

He stated that the tuition expenses the town would be responsible for without participation in the collaborative were significant.

Turner agreed that the collaborative participation allowed a more fiscally responsible approach for out of district tuition costs. He suggested it would be better if even more students out of the 63 out of district Wilmington students could benefit from the collaborative.

Brand expressed that the town heavily pursues appropriate placements in these programs when found. He noted that special education transportation brought significant budgetary increases for next year, and there was also an increase for participation in the SEEM Collaborative. However, he said that SEEM has kept costs down.

Ragsdale highlighted how SEEM had saved the town nearly \$214,000, but also that six students and one aid still cost over \$400,000.

Dr. Mike Mercaldi shared that local officials appeared to be receptive to legislation for assistance with out of district tuition costs.

Jay Samaha also suggested that they think long-term by adding staff to build their ability to keep students in-district.

Brand provided a brief update in the middle school principal search to say that there were two semi-finalists: Brian Cairra, currently serving as interim middle school principal and Robert McGrath. They would be

Heating delivery costs double this winter

By **PAIGE IMPINK**
News Correspondent

Massachusetts residents are getting a shock in their gas bills this winter. While cold temperatures contribute to energy usage, a back of the napkin calculation is showing that the delivery portion of home heating bills are at least double the charge for energy used for a given household. And that's causing residents to dig deeper to pay for heat.

Gas customers should notice the charges that make up their bill. The first is the GAF or gas adjustment factor. This is the cost to acquire and transport gas to customers. The Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities approves rates twice per year for the state's natural gas providers.

The department's website states that it approves submitted rates but does not set rates. The peak period for gas sup-

ply runs from Nov. 1 through April 30 - known as winter rates.

There are many components to the GAF, such as the cost of natural gas purchased at market price, the cost of transportation to deliver gas through pipelines into the state, the cost of fuel storage facilities, the cost of liquefied natural gas (LNG) that is used to heat homes and buildings on cold days, and a

HEAT | PAGE A7W

Select Board reviews Town Meeting warrant articles

By **LIZZY HILL**
News Correspondent

WILMINGTON — The Select Board took the next steps for the upcoming annual Town Meeting at

their Feb. 24 meeting including but not limited to reviewing the proposed warrant articles.

They voted to start the acceptance process for Eleanor Drive Extension, Murray Hill Circle and Eagleview Drive so that these streets could be voted upon at Town Meeting.

Town Manager Eric Slagle previewed the Town Meeting warrant articles for the board that night. He first described the petitioned articles: one which would amend the town

charter to establish term limits — two terms — for elected officials, and the second to rezone 306 Main St. from residential to general business.

Chair Greg Bendel stated that he would oppose the article to impose term limits on elected officials. He said that it is a thankless role in which they don't have enough people.

"I don't see why we would term limit really good volunteers," he continued.

ARTICLES | PAGE A8W

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Wilmington Library News:

Field trip: Sugarhouse at Land's Sake Farm on Saturday, March 8

Adult Programs

Drop-in Tech Help

Tuesday, March 4, 2 p.m.
Wednesday, March 5, 2 p.m.
Thursday, March 6, 2 p.m.
Saturday, March 8, 2 p.m.
Have a tech question that's been bugging you? Stop by Drop-in Tech Help.

Needleworkers at Night

Monday, March 3, 6 p.m.
These nighttime sessions are perfect for anyone who does any kind of needle craft but can't make it to Needleworkers during the day! Drop-in.

A Life in Music Lost and Found

Monday, March 3, 7 p.m.
For 50 years, Betty enjoyed a rich and rewarding career as a professional violinist — until the day she realized that she had to retire because of progressive hearing loss. In this "Talk & Play" presentation, she tells the story of how various twists and turns led her back into sharing the joy of music while educating and advocating for those with hearing loss. Her talk is punctuated by short musical selections on both violin and viola.

Slice & Dice — A Pizza and Table Top Game Night

Tuesday, March 4, 6 p.m.
Join Librarians Mary and Marie for Slice & Dice, our monthly pizza and table top game night for adults. Each month, we'll kick off with a featured game, followed by open play where you can explore our game library or bring your own favorites to share with the group!

Pints + Pages

Thursday, March 6, 7 p.m.
The group meets on the first Thursday of every other month. The book discussion will be hosted by librarians from the Wilmington and Tewksbury Public Libraries. This month's book is: What I Ate in One Year by Stanley Tucci.

Needleworkers

Friday, March 7, 10 a.m.
This is a social group for those who do any kind of needle craft. Bring your knitting, crocheting, quilting, etc. and enjoy conversation and camaraderie.



▲ Come explore the magical process of making maple syrup at Land's Sake Farm in Weston on Saturday, March 8 at 10 a.m.! The first part of the program will include an in-depth tour of the sugarhouse, followed by sampling different types of maple syrup!

Drop-in.

FIELD TRIP:

Sugarhouse at Land's Sake Farm

Saturday, March 8, 10 a.m.
Come explore the magical process of making maple syrup at Land's Sake Farm in Weston, MA. The first part of the program will include an in-depth tour of Land's Sake's Bill McLaine Sugarhouse. Then, we will sample different types of maple syrup!

Youth Programs

Special Storytime:

World Hearing Day!

Monday, March 3, 10 a.m.
Join Miss Nicole and WML's Technology Librarian Brad for a special storytime to celebrate World Hearing Day! Learn new words in ASL, sing songs, and read books. Learn about World Hearing Day and even see some real hearing aids! Ages 2-6

Preschool Storytime

Tuesday, March 4, 10 a.m.

Join us at our Preschool Storytime! This program includes books, rhymes, music and movement. Ages 3-6

Mindful Movement

Tuesday, March 4, 4 p.m.

Join library pals as we flow through children's yoga poses, calming activities, and books to help us grow in mindfulness and inner peace. Yoga mats

will be provided during the program. Grades K-2

DnD 101 for Teens

Tuesday, March 4, 6 p.m.

New players who wish to join our library campaign (or who just want to learn about the world's most popular roleplaying game) should attend our new 101 sessions, held monthly. Grades 6-12

Time for Twos

Wednesday, March 5, 10 a.m.

Time for Twos includes books, rhymes, music and movement for children age 2! Age 2

Drop-In Chess

Wednesday, March 5, 3 p.m.

Join the WHS Chess Club for low stakes, pickup chess games at the library! All skills levels are welcome. All Ages (Recommended for grades 6 & up)

Drop-In

Pajama Storytime

Wednesday, March 5, 5:30 p.m.

Wear your pajamas and enjoy a storytime before bed! We're also collecting new pajamas for the Annual Boston Bruins Pajama Drive with Cradles to Crayons! Ages 2-6

Baby Time

Thursday, March 6, 10 a.m.
Join us at our Baby Time! This program includes books, rhymes, music and movement. Ages 0-23 months

Drop-In Storytime

Friday, March 7, 10 a.m.

Join us at our Drop-In Storytimes! This program includes books, rhymes, music and movement! Ages 2-6

LEGO Building

Friday, March 7, 3:45 p.m.

Build with LEGOs at the same time as other LEGO fans and display what you make in the library! Grades K-5

Additional Information

The Boston Bruins

Pajama Drive is

Back at WML!

From now until March 15th, we'll be collecting new youth pajamas for Cradles to Crayons during the Annual Bruins Pajama Drive. These pajamas must be appropriate for all seasons and can be any youth size through an adult medium. The donations support local kids and teens and can be dropped off in the donation bin on the first and second floors of the library. For more information on the Cradles to Crayons Pajama Drive, visit cradlestocrayons.org/boston/bruins-pj-drive.

Save the Date:

Thursday, May 8, 6:30 p.m.

(The Fez Room at the Shriner's Auditorium) Wilmington Memorial Li-

Laminate and Shred Your Documents at the Library!

We now have a laminator and a paper shredder set up in our front foyer. These items are free to use and the library even provides laminating sheets too!

Book Store Next Door

The Book Store Next Door is open Saturdays from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. In January and February, the store is closed Wednesdays. Wednesday hours will resume March 5.

Museum Passes

The library has discounted passes to your favorite Massachusetts museums, attractions, and state parks. Find the full list by visiting wilmlibrary.org/services/mp.

WML In-Person & Virtual Programming

Registration is required for most in-person programs and is required for all virtual programs, as you will need to register in order to receive the Zoom link. You can register on our website at www.wilmlibrary.org or by calling (978) 658-2967.

Select Board approves many items for 4th of July Committee

By LIZZY HILL
News Correspondent

WILMINGTON — On Monday, Feb. 24, the Select Board received six requests from the 4th of July Committee for the use of spaces over the rest of the year.

4th of July Committee Chairman Patrick Giroux described that this would be the 43rd year of Fun on the Fourth. He explained that last year's use of the high school parking lot was unique and very much temporary, and for this year they looked forward to returning to the other side of the street at the Swain School parking lot.

He mentioned that he discussed with George Hooper who ensured him that much of the construction at the new town hall/school administration building would be completed by the time they'd use the parking lot. Giroux also said that the committee would work with the police and fire departments to ensure safety.

The proposed dates were June 25-29, with the carnival running Thursday through Sunday. As they had last year, they would have no carnival on Wednesday for Wilmington night, family day on Saturday with fireworks that evening, and the spectacular fireworks Sunday night.

The event would include both kids and adult

rides, as it was intended for all ages.

One brand new element for this year was a large outdoor 20-minute laser show provided thanks to a production company out of Newburyport which would also be accompanied by music. Giroux mentioned that this would culminate community spirit, keep up with latest trends and make space for children with sensory issues who may not be able to come out for the fireworks.

He noted that Wilmington's 4th of July festivities are growing while others seem to be cutting programs and that the lasers would only hit the high school.

For the permit for the carnival, they had essentially brought the same information as last year's, with only small details changed such as the dates. He added that the carnival's footprint would be slightly smaller as they understand that there will still be some construction underway.

He assured the board that he would continue to meet with town officials extensively leading up to the event.

Some of the mitigative measures that Giroux called out for neighboring residents included temporary fencing and "no smoking" signs. He said they would try to create a buffer.

For Fall Fest, Giroux shared the date planned

for Sept. 27 with a rain date of Oct. 4, although he didn't have many details yet. He anticipated using a mix of vendors, community groups, food vendors, and artisans, along with continuing the beer and cider area.

He also requested the use of the town common and Swain School parking lot for the annual Holiday Tree Lighting, to place signage for these events one month in advance, and to restrict hawkers, peddlers and transient vendors within a half mile while they use these spaces.

Select Board Chair Greg Bendel confirmed that the police and fire chiefs both recommended approval of these events and related requests.

Frank West asked if the 4th of July Committee had encountered any other issues, and Giroux said that they hadn't, they were just constantly looking for ways to improve.

Kevin Cairra asked how there would be space for watching the laser show given the size of the area proposed. Giroux confirmed that there would be ample space, and they planned to close the street a few minutes ahead of showtime.

Cairra then asked about their plan for taking down the carnival. Giroux reminded the audience that they tried 10:30 p.m. - 2 a.m. for take down last year, as op-

posed to what they previously had at the high school of all night, and they hadn't heard any complaints from nearby residents.

A few residents who live near the carnival spoke up to ask for additional barriers or protection between the carnival and their property. One resident in particular noted that there were previously trees which had been removed by the construction.

Giroux assured these residents that they would try to design a carnival that would be suitable for everyone involved, including the neighbors.

Cairra then asked if they could use the high school parking lot until the new town hall/administration building is completely finished. Giroux stated that they did talk about it, but he didn't think that the school department could rearrange their programming in time. However, he was confident they could operate the carnival on the other side of the street safely using strategic planning.

The board approved all requests: hosting Fun on the Fourth and the carnival in the end of June, Fall Fest on Sept. 27, the Holiday Tree Lighting, the signage request, and the restriction of hawkers, peddlers, and transient vendors.

Advertisement
It's Your Money
by Todd Brisbois

Draining 401(k) accounts when changing jobs: the hidden time bomb undermining retirement savings: PART I

When researchers set out to study 401(k) retirement savings accumulation, they found that thousands of studies of retirement savings accumulation ignored the surprisingly high rate of departing employees who cash out retirement savings at job separation. This is concerning because, statistically, everyone will likely change jobs multiple times before retirement.

Withdrawing savings when they leave a firm means that instead of keeping that money in savings for retirement, they've opted to take the money for other short-term consumption. Only in the U.S. do the rules make this so easy. When people cash out, they are back at square 1, with no more savings than they had when they started the job. They set themselves back years in the ability to accumulate enough savings for a comfortable retirement.

When a departing employee in America taps 401(k) savings prior to the age of 55, they must pay a 10% penalty in addition to income taxes. This means that people are losing an extra pile of their money on the way out the door.

Through their research, the team found evidence that a large component of cashing out is driven by psychology, not need. If cashing out was driven by need, it should not depend on whether the money in one's 401(k) account came from the employer or employee. The team found that the bigger the proportion of the balance contributed by the employer, the more employees treated it like a windfall that is legitimate to spend. The researchers call this the "account composition effect." The tendency prompts terminating employees to overlook the penalty and tax consequences of early withdrawals and liquidate their 401(k) savings when leaving a position.

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News and notes from WCTV

Hello friends and neighbors! Here's what's going on at WCTV!

NEW PROGRAMMING JUST FOR YOU!

Finance Committee — Feb. 13, 2025

The Wilmington Finance Committee convened on Feb. 13, 2025, to discuss key budget items for various departments. This meeting provided a platform for detailed presentations on library funding, town zoning policies, and public health initiatives.

Girls Basketball Dominant Victory on Senior night

It was senior night at Wilmington high as the Wildcats took on the Melrose Wildcats. Watch as we highlight seniors Kimmy Kane, Eva Boudreau, Alle Delgenio, and Jill Collins and their dominant win over Melrose. Congratulations to the Class of 2025 and thank you for all your hard work on and off the court!

*These programs can be viewed on WCTV channels or on WCTV's Youtube channel: WCTVWilmington.

Meetings covered

by WCTV:

Thursday March 6, 7 p.m.

Finance Committee

View on: Verizon channel 38 and Comcast channel 22

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To watch programs On-Demand or for more information check us out at WCTV.org.

WCTV is located at 10 Wal-

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Office hours by appointment: (978) 657-4066. Questions about WCTV? Contact: info@wctv.org

Lifestyle

Old State House in Boston full of history

By **HEATHER BURNS**
News Correspondent

Recently, we have been bombarded with news reports of conflict and change within our federal capitol building, many of which have further divided our nation.

Moving forward in these trying times, you may want to consider stepping backwards in history in order to embrace the beginning struggles of our great nation and remember our united fight for freedom.

New Englanders are in luck, as our nation's history is literally at our fingertips, and turning the pages of time is as easy as visiting one of our local historical treasures.

If you have never visited, or if you haven't visited in years, you may want to consider a trip to where the beginnings of government started for our nation, the iconic Old State House building in Boston.

Just like our federal capitol building, this historic landmark has seen more than its share of political conflict, and is a great place to start any journey into our nation's history.

Nestled among the modern metropolis skyline of Boston, the Old State House building is a time capsule of our nation's history that was designated as a National Landmark in 1960, and then as a Boston Landmark in 1994.

As you walk down the cobblestone roadway that leads you to the Old State House, you are instantly transported back to the days of our nation's forefathers.

The Old State House, located at the corner of State Street and Washington Street, was constructed in 1713, and known as the Town House until the Revolutionary War era.

Originally, the building was used as the center of the Royal Government in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and post-revolution, this building became the home of early city, state and colonial govern-

ments.

The Old State House was witness to some of the most important events in American history.

Inside the Old State House is Representative Hall, which was the meeting place for one of the most democratic bodies of colonial times, and featured the first public gallery in the western world where government in action could be witnessed by the public.

The first words of a revolution were spoken by colonial patriots within the very walls of this meeting house.

In 1761, James Otis gave a four-hour speech against the Writs of Assistance, marking the first major protest against British law.

In 1765, the Sons of Liberty stormed the first floor of the Old State House to protest the impending Stamp Act.

Outside of the Old State House on March 5, 1770, a major catalyst for the Revolutionary War took place. A deadly conflict between British soldiers and Bostonian colonists which became known as the Boston Massacre.

This pivotal event for our country is now marked with cobblestone and a plaque just outside of the Old State House, so visitors can experience what it was like to stand in the shoes of those who fought for our freedom from England.

On July 18, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was read for the first time from the balcony of the Old State House.

After the Declaration was read, energized Patriots tore down the gold and silver lion and Unicorn statues that sat atop the building, as these were symbols of royal authority.

The statues were then publicly burned in the name of freedom from England, and the building became the official home of the Massachusetts State House.

After the completion of the current State House in



▲ The Old State House, built in 1713, has been witness to some of the most important events in American history, including the Boston Massacre. (Heather Burns photo)

1798, the Old State House building was no longer used.

In the years to follow, the Old State House building had a variety of occupants, and was used as commercial space, office space, and at one point in history, housed Boston City Hall.

It wasn't until 1881, when the Bostonian Society was officially formed to preserve and restore the Old State House to its period grandeur.

As part of the renovations, the iconic gold and silver Lion and Unicorn were replaced. However, they were replicated with wooden versions that soon began to rot by the turn of the century.

The statues were replaced again with new replicas made of copper and steel, and then coated in gold leaf and silver metal.

These replicas have stood the test of time, only re-

quiring slight repair in 1976 and again in 2014.

In August of 2024, the regal, gilded eagle was returned to its perch atop the Old State House after a three-year renovation.

Today, the Lion, Unicorn and Eagle still stand in their gold and silver splendor to greet thousands of tourists annually, reminding us all of the struggle for our Nation's independence.

The Old State House continues on today as a period museum that is an important part of our Nation's history. It also serves as a great landmark of the City of Boston and is a popular tourist attraction as part of the Freedom Trail.

Tours of the Old State House as part of the Freedom Trail run daily at 11 a.m., noon, and 1 p.m. starting on March 1, with

additional tours at 10 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

To visit the Old State House separately from the Freedom Trail, museum hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Admission is \$15 for adults, \$8 for children 6 to 17, and children under 6 are free.

Discounts are available for seniors and college students, and active military and military veterans are also free.

'Good Guy' award nominees sought

WILMINGTON — The Super Bowl is over and perhaps your team did not win. It is the middle of February and you're still waiting for the January thaw to arrive. The Red Sox pitchers and catchers are in Florida, and you're stuck here at home. Wanna get away?...

How about submitting your nomination letter for the 2025 Wilmington Good Guy Award? The Good Guy Committee has had their first meeting and nominations are now open for you to tell them whom you think should be the honoree at this year's awards dinner in May.

Tell them how that one special person makes a difference to so many people in Wilmington.



▲ **BOLANOS**

Maybe that person is a coach, a mentor or someone who donates their time or talent to others across the community without asking for anything in return. Despite all of the nega-

tivity that dominates broadcast and social media, there are still many people in Wilmington who distance themselves from the chaos and rise above it to help others physically, mentally, emotionally, or maybe even financially.

Please send your nomination letter to wilmingtongoodguy@gmail.com or by postal mail to Wilmington Good Guy Committee c/o 2 West St. no later than Friday, April 4 at 5 p.m.

The 2025 inductee will be honored with a dinner and "roast" on Friday, May 9 at the Wilmington Knights of Columbus Hall when 2024 "Good Guy" Jennifer Bolanos officially congratulates the new winner!

Pedestrian struck, killed by Lowell Regional Transit bus

TEWKSBURY — Police Chief Ryan Columbus reports that the Tewksbury Police Department responded Monday to a fatal crash involving a pedestrian and bus.

On Monday, Feb. 24, at approximately 11:45 a.m., the Tewksbury Police Department was dispatched

to the area of Stadium Plaza, on Main Street, for a report of a crash involving a pedestrian.

Officers arrived to discover that a pedestrian was struck by a Lowell Regional Transit Authority bus that was on a planned route in the plaza's parking lot. The pedestrian was pro-

nounced dead at the scene.

The driver involved remained at the scene and is cooperating with an active and ongoing investigation.

Additional inquiries should be directed to the Middlesex District Attorney's Office.

Book Stew Review

'The Venetian Sketchbook' by Rhys Bowen

By **EILEEN MACDOUGALL**

This historical romance is a colorful homage to Venice, its watery splendor, and its idiosyncratic residents.

Two Englishwomen, a great-aunt and niece, experience the city during WWII and post-9/11, and both become entangled with men of an aristocratic family.

In 1928, Juliet Browning, a budding artist, escapes her dull life in rural England and, after falling into a canal, returns twice and develops a permanent connection to the city and a spy's role fighting fascism and Mussolini.

After her death in 2001, grandniece Caroline visits Venice to scatter Juliet's ashes and uncovers the

mysteries of her aunt's surprising life, most unlike that of the "quiet spinster" she thought she knew.

The vivid portraits of proud Venetians are beautifully rendered, and although there's space for a sequel, the denouement is pleasing in the saga, performed winningly on audio, and nominated for an Edgar Award in 2022.

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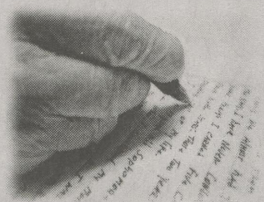
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Daily Times Chronicle • Stoneham Independent
Wilmington Town Crier & Tewksbury Town Crier



Letter to the editor

~notice concerning local spring elections~

The *Town Crier* won't accept any letters related to the upcoming Wilmington and Tewksbury elections the week of the elections. All letters should be in by Tuesday, March 25 at 5 p.m. for the Tewksbury election and Tuesday, April 15 at 5 p.m. for the Wilmington election.

Thank you.

Bajdek's generosity shone through in his life

Dear editor,
Steven Bajdek died on Dec. 31 at Lahey Hospital. He had had a lengthy health issue. He left behind many lifelong friends and care providers who cared very much for him. He was loved and cherished by many who came to our non-profit program in Lowell.

Bajdek grew up in Tewksbury. I don't know much about his childhood except that he adored his mom and he almost made it to a AAA hockey team in his youth. He loved hockey and fishing.

I knew Steve much later when he came to our non-profit program in Lowell. Our program is a place you can come every day and work in units or get a job in the community. Steve was very involved in our program and everyone loved him.

He worked at the snack bar, was a member driver and made good life long

friendships. He met the love of his life here and spent many happy years with her. We helped him heal when he lost her.

Steve lived a valuable life. His life hit some hard spots and challenges and he always came through. That was why he was so generous. He would do anything for you, all you had to do was ask. Sometimes you didn't need to ask he would just offer help if he sensed you needed it.

Steve will truly be missed by all of us in Lowell who knew and loved him.

I write all this as a reminder to everyone that we need to cherish the people in our lives. Everyone's lives have value. People like Steve who gave so much to the people he loved should be remembered with love and care.

Elizabeth Vaughan
Renaissance Club
176 Walker St.
Lowell, MA 01854

Locals asked to 'Give the Gift of Warmth'

Dear editor,
More than 1,325 Massachusetts households in need of energy assistance received warmth last winter thanks in part to the generosity of residents throughout the state who gave to the Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund. This winter, many local families find themselves in temporary crisis and in need of help with their heating bills due to the cold temperatures, in combination with continued high prices for essentials like food, rent and utilities.

The Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund, sponsored by 18 energy service providers in the state and administered by The Salvation Army, is often the last resort for families who are in need of a helping hand and who have not qualified for federal and state assistance programs.

Unfortunately, we expect the urgency of need to continue to escalate throughout the rest of the winter and into the spring. With this in mind, those in need of energy assistance should visit their local Salvation Army Service Center or call 800-262-1320 if they live in area code 413 or 800-334-3047 if they live in area

codes 508, 617, 774, 781 or 978.

To help us satisfy the more than 1,500 requests for aid anticipated this winter and spring alone, I appeal to everyone in the Wilmington-Tewksbury area to join their fellow residents in the Commonwealth and the Fund's sponsoring energy companies to "Give the Gift of Warmth."

People can donate by using the green Good Neighbor Energy Fund donation envelopes found as an insert in their monthly utility bills, scanning the QR code featured on the donation envelope or through the "add a dollar" program some energy companies offer. Residents can also donate with a credit card by visiting magoodneighbor.org or by simply writing a check payable to "The Good Neighbor Energy Fund" and sending it c/o The Salvation Army, 25 Shawmut Road, Canton, MA 02021-1408.

On behalf of all the families in need, thank you!

Sincerely,
Justin Stearns
Chairperson,
2025 Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund
Manager-Credit & Collections,
Unitil

Want your opinion heard?

We LOVE your letters!
Send Letters to the Editor to:
office@yourtowncrier.com.

All submissions must be accompanied by full name, address, and daytime contact information for verification purposes.
Letters must be e-mailed by noon on Monday in order for consideration the same week's edition.

Disability advocacy group chooses Rep. Howard bill among top priorities

LOWELL — The Disability Policy Consortium, one of the leading disability rights organizations, has selected a bill co-filed by state Rep. Vanna Howard (D-Lowell) and state Rep. Mindy Domb (D-Amherst) as one of its top three legislative priorities for the 194th General Court.

HD.2485 "An Act relative to preventing discrimination against persons with disabilities in the provision of health care" was co-filed by Howard and Domb to address explicit and implicit bias faced by people with disabilities in the health care system. State Sen. Adam Gomez

(D-Springfield) filed a companion bill (SD.1130) in the Senate.

Speaking at a policy briefing at the State House on Thursday, Howard shared how the bill is of personal importance for her as a mother of a daughter with a disability.

"Having a disability doesn't mean a reduced quality of life or mean someone should be pressured into decisions that aren't right for them. Everyone, including people with disabilities, deserve the same right to lifesaving care."

The other two top legislative priorities for the Disability Policy Consortium are HD.3617/SD.

1384 "Acts Relative to Wheelchair Repair Requirements and Consumer Protection" filed by state Rep. Jim O'Day (D-Worcester) and state Sen. John Cronin (D-Fitchburg); and HD.1953/SD.1708 filed by state Reps. Rob Consalvo (D-Boston), Majorie Decker (D-Cambridge), and state Sen. Robyn Kennedy (D-Worcester).

The O'Day and Cronin bill seeks to strengthen warranty protections and shorten repair times faced by Massachusetts residents using wheelchairs, thus saving taxpayers money. The Consalvo, Decker and Kennedy bill seeks to make

the Alternative Housing Voucher Program easier to access and administer, while increasing the maximum eligibility age from 60 to 62, thus improving program efficacy.

"This is a personal matter to me. I have a daughter who is disabled and it is a daily challenge for her and many others to have the same access to the care they need," Howard said. "It takes a village; it takes a community to come together to fight for the right for quality health care for people with disabilities."

Vanna Howard is the state Representative for the 17th Middlesex District.

Watne named to Dean's List at Univ. of Pitt-Bradford

BRADFORD, PA — The University of Pittsburgh at Bradford has named 345 students to its

fall 2024 Dean's list. Dean's list status is awarded to students who have earned a grade point

average of 3.5 or higher. Among those named to the Dean's list was Sandra Watne, a junior ex-

cise science student from Wilmington.

Incident at basketball game leads to anger over Wilmington Travel Basketball Board of Directors

To the editor,

I write to express my utmost disappointment with several members of the Wilmington Travel Basketball Board of Directors, and urge families to demand a change in leadership.

My daughter has participated in Wilmington Travel Basketball since 4th grade. I was afforded the privilege of being an assistant coach for her 6th grade team. It was a great experience and I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know dedicated young players while witnessing their growth throughout the season.

The majority of coaches for Wilmington Travel Basketball are fantastic! The majority of men and women who volunteer to mentor and support Wilmington's young basketball players do so because they understand the value of being good role models for our children.

I am genuinely grateful for the experiences that most of the coaches have created for my daughter.

Unfortunately, years of travel basketball memories have been spoiled by a very distressing event during an away game on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025 at Stoneham Central Middle School, along with the subsequent hostility towards myself and family by several members of the Wilmington Travel Basketball Board of Directors.

From the beginning of the game on Jan. 25 the referees demonstrated a complete lack of control which included allowing the Stoneham coach to walk onto the court during play. The Stoneham coach was visually intimidating — of large stature with a long gray beard wearing a black hooded sweatshirt and keeping the hood over his head throughout the game.

A Stoneham parent who was intoxicated and bel-

ligerent was seated approximately six rows in front of myself, my husband, and several Wilmington parents and spectators. This parent was mocking many Wilmington players and smelled of alcohol.

He then began a verbal altercation with a Wilmington parent. My son stood and attempted to deescalate the situation. The Stoneham parent began a tirade of gross language then motioned towards my son in a physically aggressive manner.

My husband and I then left our seats in defense of our son. The Stoneham parent continued his verbally aggressive tirade and threatening behavior while several other Stoneham parents began to move toward the scene.

The Stoneham police arrived at the school and the game ultimately ended. On the morning of Sunday, Jan. 26 my husband received an email from WTB President Joe Langone that I was being "disciplined" by the River Valley League for my behavior at the Jan. 25 game and would be suspended from attending the next three basketball games.

I say my husband received the email because Mr. Langone sent the email to an email which was not mine. I then sent Mr. Langone an email requesting he contact me by phone. During the subsequent call I asked to provide information about my experience. He declined to accept.

I also offered a video along with photographs of the situation. Once again, he declined to accept.

Mr. Langone explained that the Wilmington Travel Basketball Board of Directors would meet during that week to discuss additional disciplinary actions. I asked about an appeal process and was informed there was none.

I also asked if any other

participants had been disciplined. Mr. Langone informed me that he would not disclose as this was confidential information. I was not provided the date of the next WTB Board of Directors meeting nor was I ever contacted by another WTB Board Member to discuss the incident.

I sent a personal statement to Mr. Langone on Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2025. On Friday, Jan. 31, 2025 I received an email from Mr. Langone who informed me that the WTB Board of Directors would uphold the River Valley League suspension, and not take additional disciplinary actions against me.

I fully appreciate that no one — parent, coach, or spectator — should ever harass a game official or player. I have witnessed it happen on several occasions during both youth and high school sporting events. Personally, I have always committed to cheering for my child and her teammates while consistently reminding her that sports are meant to be enjoyable, and it is unlikely that anyone will ultimately become a professional athlete.

On Jan. 25, I was protecting my son from an intoxicated man who aggressively threatened him. There was not a single WTB Board Member present at the Jan. 25 game in Stoneham.

The Wilmington representative for the River Valley League was present for most of the game. The referees along with those representing the River Valley League were negligent

in their responsibilities to maintain a safe environment as it was evident tensions were escalating.

Ultimately, I was singled out for defending my son against a potential physical assault. I did not threaten anyone, nor did I physically touch anyone in defense of my son.

My daughter has completed her time with Wilmington Travel Basketball. I am immensely grateful to the vast majority of coaches who have volunteered countless hours of work to develop her basketball skills. Sadly, the lack of transparency and concern for Wilmington players and parents safety from the WTB Board of Directors disturbs me.

While many of our coaches are wonderful, selfless people, I do not feel the same about the WTB Board of Directors.

In my experience several of the WTB Board Members lack the leadership and willingness to support players and families during alarming situations. Rather, they seem to thrive on their perceived power to target and punish those who question their motives.

The WTB Board of Directors has demonstrated a commitment to secrecy which only fuels distrust. Based on my experience, I would advise younger Wilmington families to seek other basketball playing options for their children until there is a major change with the Wilmington Travel Basketball Board of Directors.

Laura Mahoney

Lloyd to host meet and greet at Wamesit Lanes

To the editor,

Since I announced my campaign for a seat on the Tewksbury Select Board, I have been very excited to speak with the residents and voters here around town.

I've been listening to your concerns and issues, and I'm taking your feedback on what can be done better. We have some decisions to make as a town and must work together to keep Tewksbury on track.

As a way to meet even

more residents, I want to invite you to join me at the Firewater Tavern at Wamesit Lanes on March 3 from 6 to 9 p.m. for conversation and light refreshments.

Please reach out to me at lloydryan721@gmail.com, or call me at 978-267-1576, or visit [facebook.com/electryanlloyd](https://www.facebook.com/electryanlloyd).

Respectfully,
Ryan Lloyd
Candidate for Select Board

Town Crier

Tewksbury - Wilmington

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Movie Review:

'Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy' Page B2



Recipe:

Easy Vegetable-Beef Soup Page B2



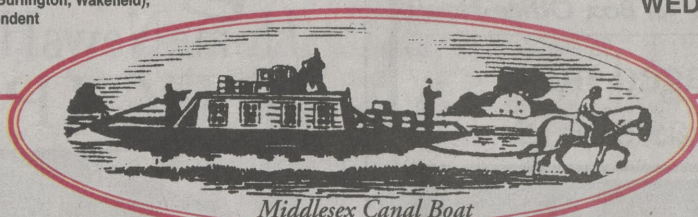
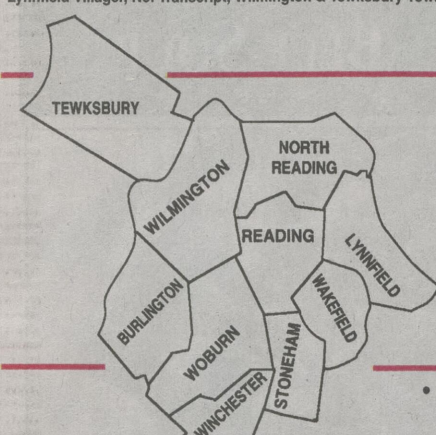
Real Estate Transfers

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MIDDLESEX EAST appearing in Daily Times - Chronicle (Reading, Woburn, Winchester, Burlington, Wakefield), Lynnfield Villager, No. Transcript, Wilmington & Tewksbury Town Crier, Stoneham Independent

WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 27, 2025 B1



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Stoneham seeks \$14.6 million override

By PATRICK BLAIS

For a community that has never approved a proposition 2 and 1/2 override, it's an unprecedented ask.

Last month, Stoneham's Select Board, warning the community will otherwise be devastated by a looming multi-year budget crisis, unanimously agreed to ask Stoneham's electorate to okay a \$14.6 million operating budget override during municipal elections on April 1.

With the typical single-family homeowner in Stoneham expected to be assessed an additional \$1,684 in real-estate taxes, town officials say the influx in new revenues will help stabilize a structural budget deficit that will otherwise plague the community through FY'29.

"The town has never passed an override, but I feel like there's a different appetite for this override based on the feedback and presentations we've had. So I would go with the higher number of \$14.6 million" said Select Board Chair Raymie Parker, before she and her colleagues voted to place the tax referendum question before Stoneham's voters.

The consequences of a no-vote, which would result in some \$9.2 million in immediate FY'26 budget cuts, would on the municipal side mainly effect the community's public safety departments, which have still not recovered from a series of financial crises that plagued the town back in the mid-2000s. Proposed FY'26 budget reductions include:

- The defunding of two police patrolman positions;
- The loss of a community traffic director;
- The layoff of two DPW mechanics and one DPW laborer;
- and a combined \$420,450 in cuts to police, fire, and DPW overtime and supply accounts.

According to Schools' Superintendent Dr. David Ljungberg, who earlier this winter began sounding the alarm about the district's potential \$4 to \$4.5 million budget deficit for FY'26, without the taxpayers help, Stoneham's public school system will be absolutely crippling.

All told, the draft FY'26 budget presented

by Ljungberg in January calls for the elimination of 39 positions, including 23 classroom teaching jobs. The school department will also be simultaneously be exploring major high school athletics program cuts and a shift from a full-day to half-day kindergarten model while simultaneously considering increases to the tuitions and fees assessed to families for those services.

"I know I was one person who sat here at our last meeting [in July] and thought, 'I don't know if I could support an override.' But just on the school side alone, the numbers we're seeing are going to decimate us," warned School Committee Chair Jaime Wallace during a budget discussion late last fall.

Besides plugging an immediate \$9.2 million budget deficit looming over the community in FY'26, the funding will also allow town officials to hire additional police, fire, and DPW personnel between next July and the summer of 2029.

The school department will also receive an additional \$2.56 million in funding to restore programs and services lost over the past two years, when previous budget issues resulted in the loss of 23 teaching and staffing positions.

As various town residents made clear during a series of recent meetings held to discuss the structural budget gap, they don't believe the community can survive a no vote.

"Our town is really at a critical crossroads right now. For years, we've relied on [deferring departmental needs], cuts, and one-time funding opportunities to fund our budget. But these measures are no longer sustainable," insisted one area resident during a community forum in Stoneham Town Hall last month.

"We definitely need to pull together as a community," another citizen later stated. "I don't see any other way forward other than to bite the bullet [and pass an override]."

Since proposition 2 and 1/2 was enacted in 1980 and required cities and towns to ask voters for any year-over-year tax levy increase that exceeds 2.5 percent, Stoneham's voters have rejected at least seven such ballots questions.

• **OVERRIDE** TO B2



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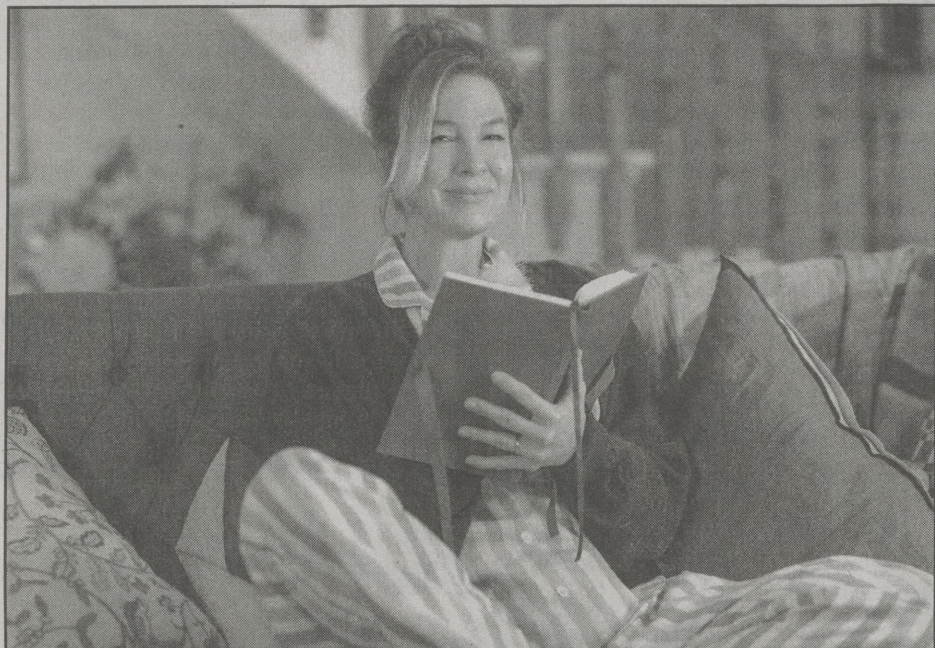
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Movie Reviews & Box Office News

'Bridget Jones' is middle-aged now.
And we still love her just as she is.



BRIDGET'S BACK - Renée Zellweger in a scene from "Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy" released by Universal Pictures.
(Jay Maidment/Universal Pictures via AP)

By JOCELYN NOVECK
AP National Writer

It is a truth universally acknowledged, as Bridget Jones herself might write in her diary, that at the end of any Bridget Jones movie, our heroine has triumphed over all doubts and obstacles and is finally happy.

With a man. Well, so far, with one particular man: Mark Darcy, the stuffy-yet-dashing man of her dreams.

This, dear viewer, is not a spoiler for the new fourth movie, "Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy." In fact, if you've seen the trailer, you'll know that Bridget (Renée Zellweger, still pretty delightful), who finally married Mark at the end of the third film, is now a widow.

We're not supposed to divulge exactly what happens next. But remember, folks, this is a classic romantic comedy franchise. Rom-coms can be sad and deep, but they still need to be romantic.

What makes "Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy" especially enjoyable, then — and the best since the 2001 original — is not that Bridget finds a way yet again to triumph over doubts and obstacles. It's that she still makes us care so darned much.

How does she do it after all these years? All I know is, I was rooting harder for her at the end of this film than I was with the others, even the original where she's kissing Mark in the snowy street in underwear and sneakers.

There are various possible explanations. One is Zellweger herself, who has brought her character gracefully into her 50s, retaining Bridget's goofiness and deep-set optimism while reflecting hard-won life experience.

And there are subtle changes to the equation. The relationships in this latest film are more interesting — old ones and new.

Bridget's relationship with herself is more interesting, too — and healthier. Sure, she can swig a full bottle of Chardonnay on a bad night. But the smoking is gone, and so, thank heavens, is the ridiculous weight obsession — a phenomenon that hit its nadir in the icky final line of the second film, with Bridget saying yes, you can find happiness, even if you "have a bottom the size of two bowling balls."

Nothing like that in this latest installment, directed by Michael Morris based on Helen Fielding's novel (Fielding also co-wrote the script), which begins four years into Bridget's widowhood. She's living in a lovingly cluttered home in Hampstead with her kids, Billy and Mabel.

Bridget is getting dressed for a rare night at a dinner party, awaiting the sitter. That sitter is ... Daniel Cleaver himself, back for the fourth film after missing the third, which contained his funeral. (He wasn't dead!) Hugh Grant is less adorable than in the beginning, more grizzled, still slightly creepy but more vulnerable — and a devoted friend.

At the party, all the couples want to know how Bridget is moving on with her life. She escapes, and at a bar later with her stalwart friend group (the gang from the previous movies), says she's done with romance.

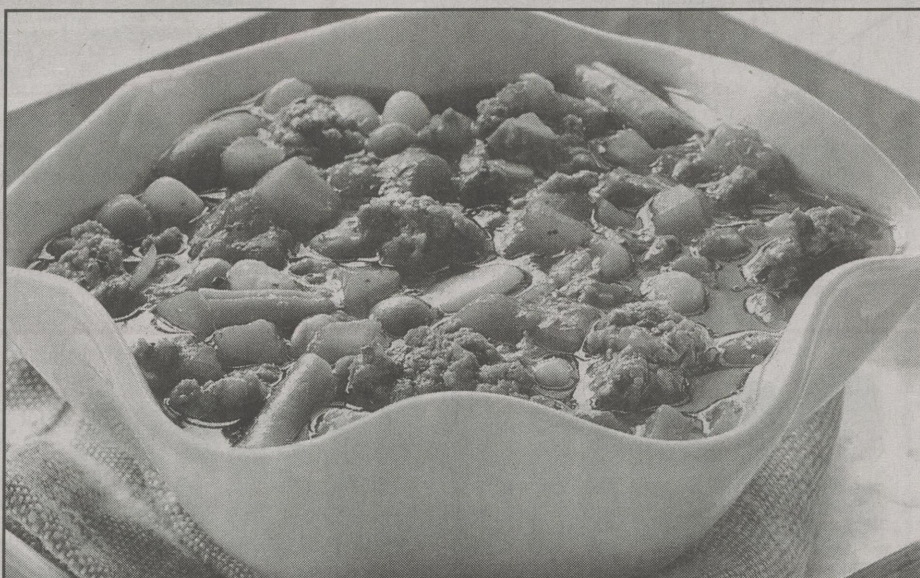
Of course, that will prove untrue. Bridget will meet her new love interest in the most Bridget Jones of ways: stuck awkwardly on a tree in the park, trying to rescue her children, also stuck.

To the rescue comes a dreamy park ranger (Leo Woodall), who also happens to see on Bridget's phone that her friends have set up a Tinder account: "Tragic Widow Seeks Sexual Awakening."

And thus, Bridget's new love interest is 29-year-old Roxster McDuff — a ridiculous name, rivaling how ridiculously sexy he is.

HomeNewsHere RECIPE

EASY VEGETABLE- BEEF SOUP



HEARTY HOME COOKING - Nothing says "I'm home" like walking in the door to the aroma of homecooked soup! Our vegetable beef soup recipe is so satisfying, it tastes like it's been simmering away all day, but it's easy enough to make even on weeknights.

STEPS

1. In 5-quart Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add beef, onions and garlic. Cook 5 to 7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until beef is thoroughly cooked; drain.

2. Stir remaining ingredients into beef mixture in Dutch oven. Heat to boiling over high heat; reduce heat. Cover; simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until hot. Ladle soup into 6 bowls.

EXPERT TIPS

This Easy Vegetable-Beef Soup recipe is great for quick grown-up brown bag lunches. Freeze in small microwaveable containers so you can slip one into a lunch bag and reheat it at mealtime.

Stir a few cups of cooked small pasta or other grains into your simple vegetable beef soup when it's done.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 lb ground beef (at least 80% lean)
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 5 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 3 cups Progresso™ beef-flavored broth (from 32-oz carton)
- 1 bag (16 oz) frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 can (14.5 oz) Muir Glen™ organic diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 can (8 oz) tomato sauce

The two embark on a steamy courtship.

At the same time, Bridget has returned to work as a TV producer. Her colleagues salivate at the sight of Roxster, especially when he shows up to a party, rips off his shirt and dives into a pool to rescue a dog.

"Now THAT'S a rebrand," Bridget's friend says approvingly of her new life. But can their relationship triumph over the considerable age gap? It's a subject — older woman, younger man — that's a hot topic in current movies.

Also raised here is the question of how one moves on from deep grief to live fully again — a goal that Bridget's late father had urged upon her (Jim Broadbent reappears briefly, as does Gemma Jones as Bridget's mother. Colin Firth appears in a few dreamy moments.)

And there are plenty of other new issues for Bridget to navigate, too, such as how hard it is to keep up with other parents at

school. For example: When Bridget is asked, by her son's handsome and interesting yet seemingly guarded science teacher Mr. Wollaker (Chiwetel Ejiofor), to speak to the class about her career, he tells her the previous parent to come in was a Nobel winner in nuclear physics.

No worries. The lessons of this last — or so they say — Bridget Jones chapter speak to how one adjusts expectations and finds the right way to live in the world.

And on that note, as old photos from 25 years of Bridget's life fly by during closing credits, it's hard not to feel like she's family — and to be more than a little proud of how she found her way.

"Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy," a Peacock release, has been rated R by the Motion Picture Association "for language and some sexual references." Running time: 124 minutes. Three stars out of four. For more reviews visit homenewshere.com.

• Override FROM B-1

Most recently, between 2005 and 2012, when a series of financial crises similarly rocked the community, the townspeople killed a \$3 million override sought to fund town and school operations that was featured in a June of 2007 special election and a smaller \$1.9 million override proposed back in April of 2011.

Really bad timing

During various community forums regarding the town's budget crisis, both Sheehan and the Select Board acknowledged that many taxpayers are already struggling with the financial pinch associated with the bill for Stoneham's new \$217 million high school.

Back in November of 2021, Stoneham's voters overwhelmingly passed by a near 4-to-1 margin an initial \$190 million debt exclusion to fund the construction of a new three-story high school off of Franklin Street by the Melrose line. At the time, town officials anticipated that the typical Stoneham homeowner would see an approximately \$830 increase in their annual tax bills over the next 30 years in order to pay off the construction project.

However, just about a year after that vote, town officials revealed that due to inflationary pressures and supply-chain logjams brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, another \$25 million was needed to bolster the high school budget. Town Meeting members, told the extra funding would add yet another \$202 in annual real-estate taxes to the average homeowner's bill, again overwhelmingly approved the additional funding.

However, during the debate over the supplemental budget, a handful of residents made clear that they were already struggling with their own cost-of-living crisis due to the same inflationary issues that drove up the SHS budget.

"I understand the high school has to be built. I love that and I want it to be built. However, families like mine spend 75 per-

cent of [our salaries] on our house. I'm already suffocating. If I get passed \$1 [in extra costs], I have to calculate where in my budget I'm going to cut that from," lamented one area resident during the Town Meeting debate back in January of 2023.

Town residents are also still paying off a \$40.6 million debt exclusion for the community's new middle school that passed back in 2012. That debt exclusion tax liability will remain on the books until around 2032.

Earlier this month, when the Select Board considered override amounts that ranged between \$9.2 million and \$14.6 million, virtually every person in attendance at the gathering begged the town officials to pick the highest figure in order to spare the community from a drastic round of layoffs and service reductions.

Though not opposed to the idea, Sheehan made clear that the \$14.6 million budget might prove a particularly tough sell, as he had recently heard from various residents — including override supporters — who worried about whether they can afford a huge tax increase while still paying off the high school.

"The biggest concern I've heard is about the [combination after having to shoulder] the high school plus this [override]," said Sheehan.

Other financial pressures

Besides shouldering the costs of a new middle and high school, Stoneham's citizenry have also seen their regular tax bill liabilities soaring right along side their home values.

For several years now, the town's assessors have warned that residential real-estate values were climbing so steeply, town officials had essentially lost control of their ability to offset homeowners' year-over-year cost increases by shifting elevated tax burdens onto the business community. The phenomenon is also being made worse by a regional trend whereby large but long underutilized commercial and industrial properties are being redeveloped into apartment

buildings or multi-family housing complexes, which reduces the scale of the communities' commercial/industrial land classes.

Though those phenomenons are hardly unique to Stoneham, as virtually every neighboring town has similarly seen residential taxes explode right alongside housing values, between FY'23 and FY'25, the average tax bill for a single-family homeowner has climbed by an estimated \$554 to \$7,834.

Given those rising costs, various Select Board members in recent months have worried that a huge override — even if it ends up passing — would force many vulnerable and longtime residents out of the community.

"There are people this will be hard on. Believe me, I'd love to have \$20 million on the ballot, but when I think about my neighbors and some families...this will be a big hit for some people," Select Board Chair Raymie Parker would later say just before sanctioning the \$14.6 million ballot question.

"Every dollar we add is a dollar that could make this unaffordable to some person. So the risk increases that this does not pass," Select Board member Timothy Waitkevitch later commented during that same January gathering in Town Hall. "I get nervous when I look at these tax bill numbers. \$1,700 in increased taxes for the average person will frighten a lot of people away."

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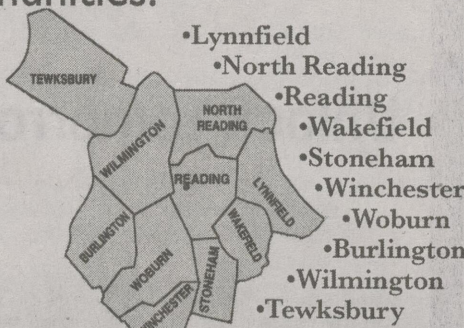
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• Real Estate Transfers •

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20 Spring Valley Rd was sold to Shan, Ruiqi by Lanagan Rt and Lanagan, Helen A for \$935,000 on 02/06/25

LYNNFIELD

Crescent Ave #F was sold to Dunn, Barbara J and Brown, Jesse H by Darrah, Dennis and Darrah, Scott for \$10,000 on 02/04/25

84 Crest Rd was sold to Silva, Sheila by 84 Crest Road Rt and Crockett, David R for \$664,900 on 02/06/25

NORTH READING

66 Winter St was sold to Sharon Street T2020 and Spinney, Roseanne J by Heffron Asphalt Corp for \$2,500,000 on 02/04/25

READING

25 Prescott St was sold to Northern Realty Group Inc by Harbor Property Group LL for \$2,550,000 on 01/27/25

8 Sanborn St #3004 was sold to McCarthy, Arthur by Tateronis, Craig M and Tateronis, Kathryn R for \$900,000 on 01/30/25

5 Mount Vernon St #5 was sold to Shea, Joseph B by Solimine, Paul J for \$175,000 on 02/05/25

5 Washington St #C2 was sold to Sawant, Shashank and Rajput, Sujata by Brearleywashington LLC for \$410,000 on 02/07/25

STONEHAM

6 Windsor Rd was sold to Leone, Suzanne M and Lindner, John S by Martins, Katherine C and Martins, Pedro H for \$950,000 on 01/30/25

3 Woodland Rd #417 was sold to Hillside Ma Realty LLC by Rs Realty LLC for \$314,500 on 01/31/25

100 Fellsvieview Ter #105 was sold to Paul Francis Dev Grp LLC by Edwards, Robert A for \$280,000 on 02/06/25

9 Kirmes Rd was sold to 91 Glenn Street LLC by Herlihy Joanne B Est and Vitali, Anne E for \$646,000 on 02/03/25

TEWKSBURY

35 Oak St was sold to Lonano Prop Holdings LLC by Colbert, Joseph E for \$420,000 on 01/31/25

450 Pinnacle St was sold to Magaletta, Michael J and Magaletta, Kelsey E by Lukomski, Hubert S and Lukomski, Cindy L for \$890,000 on 01/27/25

3 Virginia Rd was sold to Poudel, Kishwor and Banstola, Asmita by Garnett, Cameron and Garnett, Alexis M for \$655,000 on 01/27/25

16 Brookfield Rd was sold to Gahagan, Bradley R by Gahagan, Debbie A for \$562,000 on 02/03/25

520 Foster Rd was sold to Connolly, Kaleigh by Keenan, Jill A and Keenan, Frederick T for \$577,000 on 02/03/25

79 Harrison Rd was sold to Ajm Construction LLC by Seventy-Nine Harrison LL for \$290,000 on 02/07/25

268 Pine St was sold to Pereira, Norma C by Edwards, James for \$500,000 on 02/05/25

7 Pinewood Rd was sold to Fanciullo Jr, Joseph J by Eatherton, Diane M for \$285,000 on 02/03/25

WAKEFIELD

5 Bennett St #2 was sold to Parks, Daniel by Berlinski, Lisa for \$950,000 on 02/07/25

37 Heritage Ln was sold to Cyr, Valerie by Cdg Investments LLC for \$861,000 on 02/06/25

20 Pitman Ave was sold to Kurtz, Jonathan R and Kurtz, Anthony R by Marshall Susan Isabel Es and Marshall, Alfred R for \$850,000 on 02/06/25

WILMINGTON

203 Lowell St #313 was sold to Miele, Jillian C and Rebeiro, Joseph F by 203 Lowell St Owner LLC for \$655,000 on 01/29/25

203 Lowell St #203 was sold to Zhu, Xiaoyu and Yin, Dongjian by 203 Lowell St Owner LLC for \$650,000 on 01/31/25

449 Middlesex Ave was sold to Grundstrom, Karen by Catherine H Dickson Lt and Sullivan, Brendan J for \$675,000 on 01/28/25

29 Oakdale Rd was sold to Magyar, Christopher and Benison, Megan E by Casey Lorraine A Est and Casey, Pamela J for \$555,000 on 01/31/25

9 Davis Rd was sold to Masozera, Manzi N and Masozera, Kayla N by Begon, Emmanuel N and Begon, Jennifer D for \$705,000 on 02/05/25

203 Lowell St #107 was sold to Chiang, William and Lei, Hongyun by 203 Lowell St Owner LLC for \$455,000 on 02/07/25

271 Main St was sold to Mag Re Hldg-Wilmington LL by Cm Rt and Patti, Charles J for \$2,750,000 on 02/03/25

500 Main St was sold to Muney Realty LLC by 500 Main Street Rt and Ficociello, Jeanne E for \$695,000 on 02/05/25

WINCHESTER

36 Oneida Rd was sold to Crane, Peter and Crane, Jennifer by 111 Arlington Street LLC for \$1,650,000 on 01/30/25

11 Plymouth Rd was sold to Li, Ning and Shen, Qiuying by 11 Plymouth Road Rt and Haley, Patricia A for \$1,900,000 on 01/29/25

63 Shore Rd #13 was sold to 63 Shore Road LLC by Shore Road No 13 Nt and Russo, Thomas D for \$500,000 on 02/03/25

WOBURN

36 Wood St was sold to Bhatti, Parmjit S by Dodiva Inc for \$1,100,000 on 01/27/25

55 Lowell St was sold to 55 Lowell Street LLC by Mary E Carpenter Lt and Carpenter 3rd, William for \$510,000 on 02/07/25

8 Stephanie Cir was sold to Xiong, Xiaolu and Zhuo, Qiao by Sullivan, Dennis M and Sullivan, Linda C for \$1,030,000 on 02/07/25

Saturday, March 1 at 8:00 p.m., award-winning singer/ songwriter Susan Cattaneo returns to Arlington Regent Theatre begins Women's History Month with a musical tribute

On Saturday, March 1st at 8:00pm award-winning singer/songwriter Susan Cattaneo returns to Arlington's Showplace to kick off Women's History month with a celebration of the female artists who influenced generations of other women to take center stage. She has named the event, "All The Women I Love" and will bring music from the songbooks of Linda Ronstadt, Bonnie Raitt and Emmylou Harris to life in her triumphant return to the Regent Theatre stage.

The performance is not a traditional tribute, focused on jukebox versions of the hits featuring the music of only one artist. It will be a musical love letter from one of Boston's most respected singer/songwriters to the women who made her the artist she is today and an inside view of how their influence shaped her music.

The night will be a fitting start to Women's History Month at the historic 108-year-old theatre with more musical events planned throughout March. This Saturday night, Susan is bringing her all-star band featuring some of Boston's most beloved musicians featuring Peter Moore on the keyboard, Andy Santospago on lead guitar, bassist Joe McMahon and Marco Giovino on drums.

This is what the late, beloved and highly missed Steve Morse (former Boston Globe music critic) wrote after attending last year's show. "Sensational is barely the word to cover Susan Cattaneo's show at the Regent Theatre last night. She called it a tribute to "All the Women I Love," most notably Linda Ronstadt, Bonnie Raitt and Emmylou Harris. It was a labor of love — and a captivating trip through some of

the most important song books of our times. Susan had the voice to invest nearly every tune with just the right color and spirit, while also touching upon classics by Carly Simon, Carole King, Joni Mitchell and Christine McVie. She was funny when need be, serious as well, and her Boston-based band was impeccable. This show is so good that it could tour theaters nationally, and I can hardly wait for Cattaneo to do it again."

Susan Cattaneo knows her way around a song and has been a staple of the Boston music scene, as a performer artist and sought after co-writer. She has toured extensively in the US and in Europe. She is a five time nominee at the Boston Music Awards. She was a three-time finalist at the prestigious New Folk contest at the Kerrville Folk Festival and was the winner of the CT Folk Festi-

val. In addition to her career as an artist, Susan is a sought-after songwriting educator: she taught for 20 years at Berklee College of Music and has taught at the national and various regional Folk Alliance conferences, and at songwriting camps in the US and Europe.

Don't miss this encore performance of Susan Cattaneo's 2024 performance of the year this weekend. The doors will open for seating at 7:15pm and tickets are available. The Regent Theatre "Arlington's Show Place of Entertainment" since 1916 is located on 7 Medford Street in Arlington, Massachusetts—minutes from Cambridge, Boston, and Routes 2 and 95.

For tickets and more information visit <https://regenttheatre.com> or call 781-646-4849.



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Tewksbury Police Log

Two women arrested for OUI liquor last week

Monday, February 17

1:40 a.m. - Andover Police Department reported they received a 911 hang-up at Extended Stay America. No answer on call back. A voicemail was left. Police sent. Nobody appeared in distress. Everyone cleared.

1:57 a.m. - Four door, black truck was seen on the property of Atamian Honda. They got out and walked around a tractor. It was nine minutes ago. Police sent. Male party was just warming up his tractor to move the snow from the property. He was the snow contractor.

10:40 a.m. - Caller reported three men got into the building without being buzzed in at Apache Way. The men knocked on every door in the building but never said why they were there and left. Police sent. They checked the area and a female couldn't provide video. Males were gone on arrival.

12:21 p.m. - Caller stated a female was yelling and arguing after being told her coupon wasn't valid at Andover Street. She had to pay. Police sent. Civil issue over room reservation.

5:33 p.m. - Caller report-

ed she posted a video on the residents' Facebook page where a female put items in the trash barrel at Tanglewood Avenue. Female stated about 45 minutes ago, the same female returned and attempted to enter the home and bark at the dogs. Police sent. Officer filed a report.

8:13 p.m. - Caller reported a woman was laying in the snow bank across the street from the A.L. Prime. Caller was passerby and had left the area. Police sent. Nothing found in the area. Upon his arrival, a female was leaving in an Uber.

Tuesday, February 18

12:22 a.m. - A 911 call for a stranger that walked up to the residence with a flash light and looked around at Sheridan Lane. Caller reported this happened 10 minutes prior to the calling. Police sent. They spoke with the callers and reviewed the video footage. It appeared to be an Amazon delivery driver. Party never tried making entry to home. Package left on the steps.

10:02 a.m. - Caller reported a suspicious dark BMW that was parked behind the building at Bernard's Jewelers. When her

husband went outside to ask why he was parked there, he flipped him off and left the parking lot heading southbound on Main Street. Caller requested to speak with an officer. Police sent. They spoke with the caller and reported they just wanted to make the police aware and he was advised to call back if the vehicle returned.

12:27 p.m. - Manager at Circle K reported they were having ongoing issues with a customer walking around the counter and making the staff uncomfortable. Caller reported that party left without incident when asked but they would like him no trespass from the property. Caller reported party left in a motor vehicle. Police sent and officer filed a report.

1:40 p.m. - Caller reported an employee left Roy Way and they believed he was under the influence. Caller reported he left in a gray Acura on Livingston toward East Street about five minutes ago. Police sent. Officer filed a report.

5:26 p.m. - Caller noticed foot prints on the side of her house toward her basement window at Kendall Road. Caller was concerned. Police sent. The foot-

prints head up to the residence but no signs of forced entry present.

11:01 p.m. - Passerby reported two cars were in a motor vehicle accident at Ocean State Job Lot. One car appeared to be on a snow bank. Police sent. Kailyn Ortiz, 43, of 473 Moody St. in Lowell, was arrested and charged with OUI liquor, negligent operation of motor vehicle, and marked lanes violation.

Wednesday, February 19

4:36 a.m. - Male customer refused to leave at Circle K. He was yelling at the customers and staff. The male was white with blue jeans and gray sweatshirt. Police sent. They gave him a courtesy transport to Saints Hospital. Officer filed a report.

11:38 a.m. - A 911 caller reported she was hearing noises and then someone ran down the steps inside at Mitchell G Drive. Caller stated she was outside with a knife. Police sent. House cleared possibly ice melt down the gutter.

3:27 p.m. - Caller reported a tall male walking around her and her neighbors yard at Kearsage Street. She told him to leave and he sped off in his black BMW. Police sent and spoke to caller. Most likely a solicitor. They advised to call back if subject returned.

3:53 p.m. - Calling party reported that a female's vehicle was towed last night from the property and now she caused a disturbance at Lodge at Ames Pond.

Caller reported the female was threatening to harm herself due to not caring about anything anymore, going crazy, and saying, "do you want me to go home and kill myself?" Police sent and officer filed a report.

Thursday, February 20

7:46 a.m. - Caller stated a red car with a woman slumped over and took off toward Lowell from Tree House Brewing. Police sent. Kimberly Waitkevich, 49, of 75 South Policy St. in Salem, New Hampshire, was arrested and charged with OUI liquor, marked lies violation, and negligent operation of motor vehicle.

4:31 p.m. - A 911 caller reported he bought four wheels that don't work at Rogers Street. Caller went back to get his money back and other party doesn't want to give a refund. They bought it off Facebook and other party heard in background saying, "get off my property." Caller waited in a white GMC. Police sent and spoke to the parties. Civil matter.

7:55 p.m. - A 911 caller reported three people walking in the backyard wearing a headlamp and using flashlights at Louis Road. All the men were dressed in black, some wearing hats. They were walking along wood lines toward Louis Road. While on call, the caller lost visual and would like to speak to officer after the area was secure. Police sent. Everyone checked out. They were neighbors in the woods looking for a dog.

Friday, February 21

5:09 p.m. - Caller reported road rage at Oscar's Pinatas. Caller was no longer behind the vehicle. Police sent. The vehicle could not be located. Caller wanted to speak with an officer.

9:48 p.m. - A 911 caller reported small black Nissan driving erratically in the lot of Walmart. A white female wore a red sweatshirt, was in her mid-20s, and got out of the vehicle and yelled at the caller. Caller was in the store and did not wish to speak with an officer. Police sent. There was no vehicle driving erratically in the parking lot. Vehicle was gone on arrival.

Saturday, February 22

12:51 a.m. - Front desk reported a party they want removed from the lobby "acting intoxicated" and refusing to leave at Motel 6. He was not registered at the Motel 6. Black male, approximately five foot eleven, wore a blue sweater, black jacket, and had a black bag. Police sent. Male party had little alcohol but was in good health. Police transported to Tewksbury Commons.

Sunday, February 23

10:45 a.m. - A 911 caller reported an erratic operator almost crashed into another vehicle at Salem Road and South Street. Police sent. They located the vehicle in the driveway, unoccupied. They spoke to the operator of the vehicle and it turned out OK. No impairment.

Thursday, Feb. 20:

12:50 p.m.: A caller on Grove Avenue reported hearing banging and yelling coming from a home. Police spoke to the resident, where it was discovered that she found a squirrel in her house, and the banging and yelling was her attempt to scare it away.

7:55 p.m.: A caller on Main Street reported receiving a call from a California phone number, with a man stating he needed to coordinate a delivery of upgrade equipment to the store. The man asked the manager to count the money in the safe, and said he'd have a FedEx driver retrieve \$11,000 to pay for the equipment. The manager confirmed with corporate that the man on the phone was lying.



Wilmington Police Log

Middleton man arrested on charge of 2nd offense OUI

Friday, Feb. 14:

1:10 p.m.: A woman on Cleveland Avenue called due to a residential lock-out; however, later a resident said she saw the woman on camera, and stated that the woman hadn't lived at the house since last September. The situation was found to be a civil matter, but the woman was not given access to the house.

2:46 p.m.: An employee of the Enterprise on Main Street reported that they found a shell casing under the driver's side floor mat of a previously rented car

6:43 p.m.: Michael Richard Apicella of 1 Old Haswell Park Road, in Middleton, was arrested for a 2nd offense of OUI-Liquor over .08%, negligent operation of a motor vehicle, and failure to stop/yield. This followed his involvement in a motor vehicle accident between a blue 2017 Kia Sorento and a gray 2017 Toyota Rav4 on Woburn Street.

Saturday, Feb. 15:

7:12 p.m.: A gray 2023 Hyundai Elantra hit a

snowbank near Sonny's Mobile on the Run on Lowell Street. No injuries were reported.

Sunday, Feb. 16:

12:42 a.m.: A caller on Salem Street reported that a red 2010 Toyota Corolla crashed into her fence. No injuries were reported.

9:47 a.m.: A plow driver reported that he had backed into a gray 2018 Kia Forte on Morgan Road. Police left a note on the front door of the car's owner's house to contact the station.

1:33 p.m.: A caller on Woburn Street reported that someone stole her shovel off her front porch; she stated that she believed a young person took it to shovel driveways. The caller was later able to find the shovel.

Monday, Feb. 17:

6:53 a.m.: Matthew George O'Connell of 76 Lowell St., in Wilmington, was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license. This followed a stop of his black 2008 Jeep Grand Cherokee

on West Street.

11:34 a.m.: A caller on Ballardvale Street reported that a piece of ice fell off a truck and smashed the windshield of his black 2020 Honda Accord. Insurance paperwork was exchanged, and the truck driver was cited for failure to remove ice/snow.

7:31 p.m.: A resident on Faneuil Drive reported that her neighbor was blowing snow onto her property and hitting her windows. Police found that

it was a company removing the snow, and found no damage to the side of her house. She was advised to call back the next morning if she saw any damage.

Tuesday, Feb. 18:

5:30 p.m.: A walk-in party reported that their credit card company notified them of a case of fraud that had occurred at Wilmington Nails on Main Street. The credit card company refunded their money, but the salon had no record of the transactions in question. The person asked if there had been any cases of credit card skimming lately, but was told there wasn't.

Wednesday, Feb. 19:

5:25 a.m.: Gustavo F. Rodriguez of 806 Border St.,

Apt. #B, in East Boston, was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended or revoked registration and a number plate violation.

7:27 a.m.: A white 2021 Toyota Venza hit a motorbike on Main Street. One person involved may have broken their arm, and parts of Main Street and Grove Avenue were temporarily shut down in the aftermath of the situation.

6:14 p.m.: A caller on Salem Street reported that her car was hit while parked at the Market Basket on Main Street. She stated that a witness was able to provide her info on the other car. The man who hit her car called later, and reported that the two of them had exchanged insurance paperwork.

Students named to Dean's List at Quinnipiac University

HAMDEN, CT — The following area students were named to the dean's list for the Fall 2024 semester at Quinnipiac University:

Tewksbury

- Nathan Cyr
- Noelle Gadue

Wilmington

- Julia Archer*
- Samar Johar
- Gabriella Monteforte

To qualify for the dean's

list, students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 with no grade lower than C. Full-time students must complete at least 14 credits in a semester, with at least 12 credits that have been graded on a letter grade basis to be eligible. Part-time students must complete at least six credits during a semester. Names followed by an asterisk denotes with honors.

Quinnipiac is a private, coeducational, institu-

tion located 90 minutes north of New York City and two hours from Boston. The university enrolls 9,400 students in 110 degree programs through its Schools of Business, Communications, Education, Computing and Engineering, Health Sciences, Law, Medicine, Nursing and the College of Arts and Sciences.

Quinnipiac is recognized by U.S. News & World Report and Princeton Review's "The Best 388 Col-

leges." The university is in the midst of program expansion and renewal for both traditional and adult learners, attraction of diverse communities, development of innovative corporate partnerships and construction of an ambitious set of capital projects.

For more information, please visit qu.edu. Connect with Quinnipiac on Facebook and follow Quinnipiac on X @QuinnipiacU.

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Wilmington PD receives federal grant for portable drug-testing equipment

WILMINGTON — Police Chief Joseph Desmond is pleased to share that the Wilmington Police Department has received a \$30,000 federal grant, which has been used to purchase a spectrometer that will greatly enhance the Department's capabilities during drug investigations.

The DetectaChem Apex Raman Spectrometer can rapidly and accurately identify substances such

as narcotics in the field. The tool is portable and user-friendly, allowing officers to perform non-destructive narcotics testing on-site, reducing response time and minimizing risks associated with handling potentially dangerous drugs.

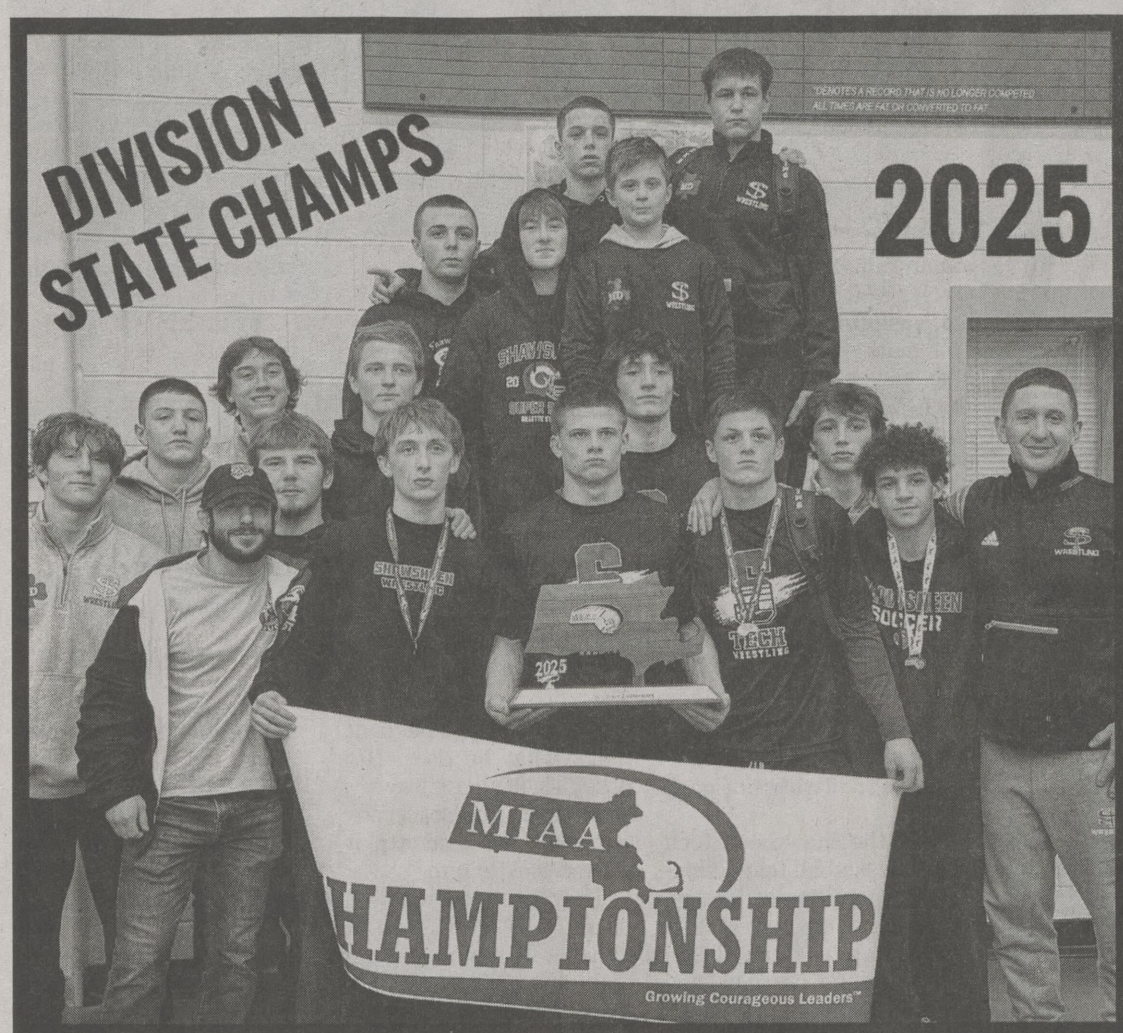
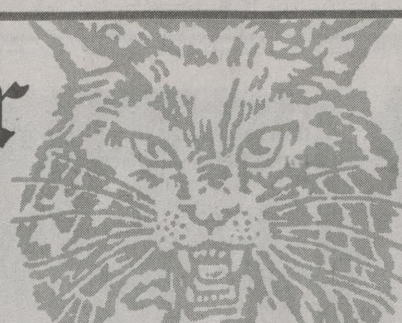
The system also stores data that strengthens the legal integrity of investigations and provides real-time evidence to support arrests and search

warrants.

Drug Task Force Detective Michael Patterson applied for the grant. The grant will fully reimburse the Department for purchasing the spectrometer, which costs \$30,657.

"This device will play a critical role in assisting in drug investigations and maximizing the Department's success and efficiency in keeping dangerous drugs off of the

streets," said Chief Desmond. "This funding is entirely possible due to the dedicated efforts of detective Patterson. He did great work in writing the grant, which the Department and the community will strongly benefit from. We are beyond grateful to have this device and thankful for Det. Patterson for securing the funding."



▲ The Shawsheen Tech wrestling team won the Div. 1 team title on Saturday. (Courtesy photo)

SHAWSHEEN WRESTLERS RULE THE DAY

*With three individual champs,
Rams capture Div. 1 team title*

By DOUG HASTINGS
Sports Correspondent
sports@yourtowncrier.com

The Shawsheen Tech wrestling team added another impressive line to the resume of perhaps the finest season in the long, successful history of the program on Saturday.

The Rams won the Div. 1 state championship, outscoring a field that included second-place Central Catholic, third-place St. John's Prep and Chelmsford, who finished fourth.

Shawsheen had three state champions and eight wrestlers score in a memorable performance.

Sid Tildsley, James Tildsley and Dante Giusti won their respective weight classes for

Shawsheen.

Giusti won at 120 pounds, outscoring Cale Wood of Haverhill by an 11-3 score in the championship match.

Giusti beat his first three opponents by fall.

James Tildsley continued his amazing season with a victory at 150 pounds.

Tildsley won his first three matches, all by fall in 47 seconds, 57 seconds and 1:39.

In the finals, he won by technical fall over Troy Greaney of Leominster, leading 21-6 in the second period when the match was stopped.

Sidney Tildsley, a senior, put the finishing touches on his brilliant career with a victory at 138 pounds.

After winning his three mat-

ches by fall, Sidney won the final when Cooper Wiebe of Fitchburg forfeited.

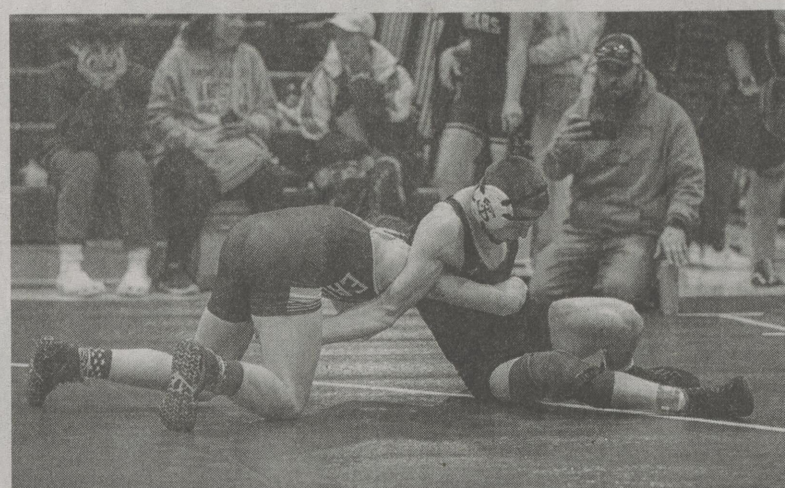
At 165 pounds, Logan Holmes came in second place, falling to Beverly's Joseph Baker in the final. Baker led 21-2 in the third period when the match was stopped.

Prior to the final, Holmes won by fall and a technical fall before a thrilling 5-4 decision over Anthony Archambault of Andover in the semifinals.

The Rams had two fourth-place finishers.

At 106, Jayden Perez took fourth while Brayton Carbone was fourth at 126.

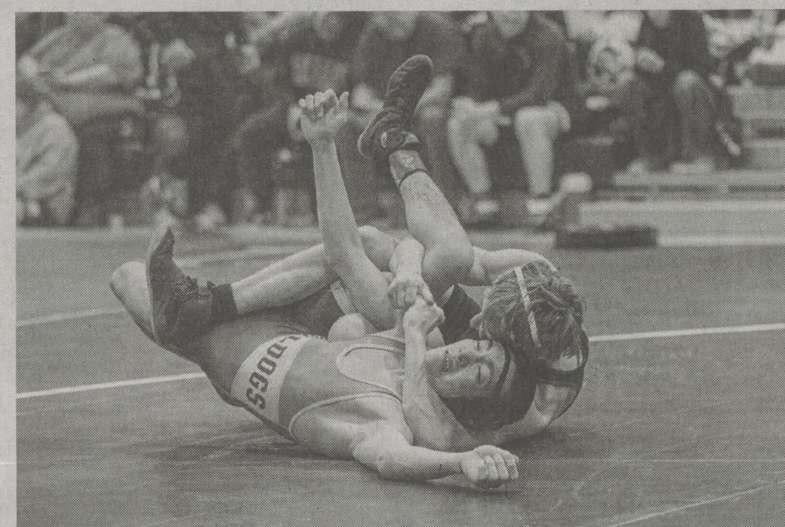
Two Shawsheen grapplers ended up sixth, Nathan Malandain at 190 pounds and Tristan Lane at 144.



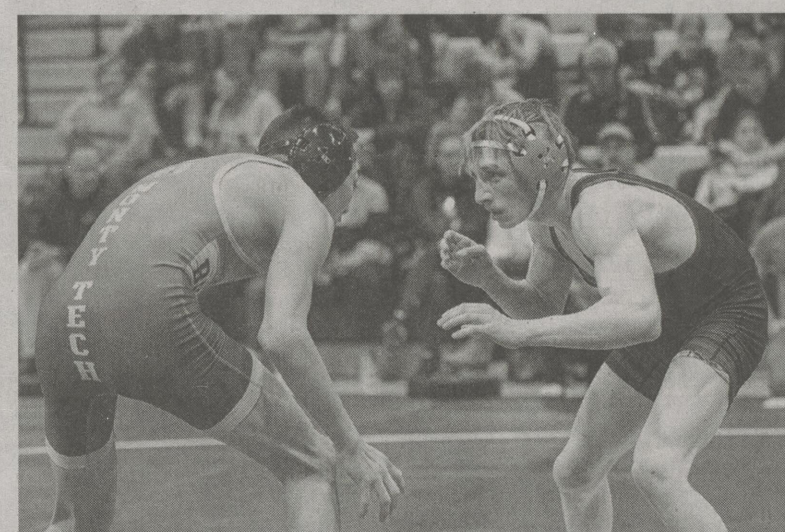
▲ Brayton Carbone of Shawsheen Tech, right, grabs the leg of Franklin County's Maxon Brunette during Saturday's Voctech State wrestling tournament in Tyngsboro. Carbone won by pin. (Credit Image: James Thomas)



▲ Brayton Carbone of Shawsheen Tech, right, grabs the leg of Franklin County's Maxon Brunette during Saturday's Voctech State wrestling tournament in Tyngsboro. Carbone won by pin. (Credit Image: James Thomas for the Lowell Sun)



▲ Dante Giusti of Shawsheen Tech, right, cradles Sean Lyle of Monty Tech during Saturday's Voctech State wrestling tournament in Tyngsboro. Giusti went on to win first place in the 120-pound division. (Credit Image: James Thomas)



▲ Dante Giusti of Shawsheen Tech, right, battles Sean Lyle of Monty Tech during Saturday's Voctech State wrestling tournament in Tyngsboro. Giusti went on to win first place in the 120-pound division. (Credit Image: James Thomas)

Shawsheen boys hockey wins state crown

Thibert (2 goals, 1 assist) sparks state voke-clinching victory

By DOUG HASTINGS
Sports Correspondent
sports@yourtowncrier.com

The Shawsheen Tech boys hockey team won the

state's vocational championship on Saturday night at Boston's Warrior Arena. The Rams beat Blackstone Valley of Upton by a 3-1 score.

Junior Justin Thibert of Wilmington had two goals and an assist to spark Shawsheen.

Thibert's first goal, assisted by junior Jacoby

Patterson of Billerica, gave the Rams a 1-0 lead after the first period.

Blackstone would tie the game at 5:43 of the second period, but Thibert

put the Rams back out in front at 12:44, finishing another feed from Patterson.

Shawsheen got a huge insurance goal with 3:48

remaining when freshman Josh Baker of Tewksbury scored with assists to Patterson, his third, and Thibert.

Senior Aidan Fortunato had another big game in net for the Rams.

Next up for Shawsheen is the Div. 3 state tournament.

The Rams are the 10 th seed with an overall record of 16-3-2.

On Thursday, Shawsheen hosts East Longmeadow at Billerica's Hallenborg Rink starting at 7:10 p.m.

Shawsheen will likely face Melrose over the weekend if it wins on Thursday.

◀ On Saturday, the Shawsheen Tech boys hockey team won the state's vocational championship in Boston.

(Courtesy photo)





▲ Lukas Poirier hustles to make a play.

(Doug Hastings photo)

The Dougout:

Poirier came through when Rams needed him most

By DOUG HASTINGS
Sports Correspondent
sports@dailytimesinc.com

With the Shawsheen Tech boys basketball team clinging to a two-point lead in the fourth quarter of Friday's state vocational title game against Greater Lawrence, Ram guard Lukas Poirier saw an opening and took it.

The senior drove to the hoop, drew a foul and tossed in a layup.

While Poirier missed the ensuing foul shot, the emotion coming from the team's bench as Shawsheen took a 45-41 lead was significant.

Moments later, with the Rams up 47-42, Poirier hustled to track down an offensive rebound and powered inside, scoring to push the lead to seven with only two minutes to go.

"That's Lukas," Gore said. "He's a dog and he's an unsung hero. Whatever win-

ning play needs to be made, that's what he does. He's unselfish. It doesn't always show up in the scorebook, but when we need a play, we can look to him."

"They push me hard in practice," said Poirier. "They tell me to use my body and get physical and the coaches always tell me to be aggressive. Sometimes I don't, but I stepped up today when we needed it."

Poirier helped spark Shawsheen's critical first-half run.

With the Rams down 21-9, Poirier scored his first hoop of the night with a layup, then drew a foul with a textbook boxout on a defensive rebound moments later.

In the second half, Poirier and teammate Dyllon Pratt led a ferocious trapping defense that forced Greater Lawrence into poor decisions. Poirier even added a blocked shot to his

memorable performance.

"That kid is full of fight," said Gore. "We've had a lot of guys step up in a ton of different roles this season, but as far as scoring, we've really been looking for third or fourth piece and between Dyllon and Lukas today, we're hoping this builds that momentum for that going into the (state) tournament."

Poirier admits, he knew this Shawsheen team had the potential to do something special right from the first day of practice.

"I knew there was something special," he said.

Poirier's future in sports is on the baseball diamond. He'll suit up for Wentworth next fall, but the carpentry student at Shawsheen is hoping he still has a few games left on the court.

The Rams start the state tournament on Friday night at home.

▲ Lukas Poirier helped the Rams win a state title on Saturday. (Doug Hastings photo)



▲ The Shawsheen cheerleaders include (front row, from left) Assistant Coach Rylee Pratt, Ariana Braga, Capt. Bella Nelson, Capt. Nicole Botte, Capt. Gianna Ballou, Capt. Skyler Sullivan, Sydney Mercier, Charlotte Bartolone, Head Coach Samantha Cacciola; (Back row) Assistant Coach Sandra Robson, Alyssa Robson, Hannah Wilson, Rachel Botte, Keilani Peralta, Sarah Milne, Juliana Fowler, Nadia Moustafa, Junior Varsity Coach Jordan Uiterwyk. (Courtesy photo)

Shawsheen cheerleaders are No. 1

Rams capture CAC Invitational crown

By DOUG HASTINGS
Sports Correspondent
sports@yourtowncrier.com

The Shawsheen Tech cheerleading team recently won the Commonwealth Athletic Conference Cheerleading Invitational against Greater Lowell, Lowell Catholic, Mystic Valley, Lynn Tech, and Whittier Tech High School held this last weekend at Greater Lowell Tech High School.

"After a very tough week of practice these girls put on a performance and although not perfect their skills, difficulty and hard work paid off," Ram coach Samantha Cacciola said. "This season, Shawsheen has all, but two injured athletes, competing on her competition team including all graduating seniors, and three new freshmen. This team is made up of 13 teammates that all really

bring different assets and strengths to the mat. Together when they work together they can really achieve their goals and make everyone proud."

The cheer squad capped off quite a stretch for Shawsheen teams as the boys basketball, boys hockey and wrestling teams all won championships.

"Big shout out to our family and friends that continue to support us week after



week," Cacciola added. "No matter how far the drive, bringing us snacks, waters, cheering as loud as they can — they are always there for us."

▲ The Shawsheen Tech senior cheerleaders include (from left) Sydney Mercier, captain Bella Nelson, Ariana Braga, Charlotte Bartolone, captain Skyler Sullivan and captain Gianna Ballou.

(Courtesy photo)



▲ The Shawsheen Tech boys basketball team won the state vocational title on Saturday.

(Doug Hastings photo)

Boys hoop team rallies past
Greater Lawrence to claim title

Rams are state voke champs

By DOUG HASTINGS
Sports Correspondent
sports@dailytimesinc.com

Two nights after a 37-35 come-from-behind win by the Shawsheen Tech boys basketball team in the state vocational semifinals, the Rams did it again in the championship game.

On Saturday afternoon in front of a packed house, Shawsheen shook off an 8-0 deficit to start the game and trailed 21-9 halfway through quarter No. 2 before storming back to beat Greater Lawrence, 58-47, to capture the state title.

"I'm so proud of them," Shawsheen coach Joe Gore said. "This is a testament to them. They earned this."

The final score was deceiving. Shawsheen led just 43-41 with five minutes to go in the game and 45-42 before a 12-3 run slammed the door on the Reggies.

Senior Franck Moron's inside basket made it 47-42 before senior Lukas Poirier hustled to an offensive rebound and drove to the rack for two more points.

Junior Dyllon Pratt then

buried a corner 3-pointer to push the Ram lead to 10, 52-42.

Greater Lawrence cut the lead back to seven with 1:32 left, but Moron applied the finishing touches with two free throws and then a terrific assist to Pratt, who converted a three-point play with a layup and a foul shot for a 12-point lead.

Pratt had a career-defining game, scoring 20 points and burying five monster 3-pointers along the way.

"He missed the first half of the season," said Gore, "but Dyllon Pratt came in today and made his mark. He knocked down some clutch 3-pointers. These guys fed Dyllon and he took advantage of this moment."

Moron added 17 points and senior Matt Breen had 13 to lead the Shawsheen offense.

Junior Albert Diaz led a balanced Reggie attack with 12 points, senior Ellis Macea and junior Elain Alvarez added nine apiece and freshman Amarian Lopes contributed eight.

Greater Lawrence started the game with a flurry.

Macea had a layup and a 3-pointer and Lopes swished a three to put Shawsheen in an early hole.

The Rams closed the quarter with a 9-2 spurt and trailed only 10-9 after the first eight minutes.

Moron had back-to-back baskets, Pratt hit his first 3-pointer and freshman Nate Smith scored off a nice pass by Breen. Breen had a nice defensive sequence in the closing moments of the quarter, blocking a shot and then forcing a traveling violation in successive possessions by the Reggies.

Greater Lawrence started the second quarter with another surge of its own. The 11-0 run pushed the visiting team's lead to 12 points and included 3-pointers by Alvarez and Diaz.

After calling a timeout with 4:39 to go in the half, Shawsheen finished the second quarter with a 9-0 run.

"We've had great resilience this year," said Gore. "We were down double digits and they never quit."

Poirier and Moron had baskets, Moron and Breen had one foul shot each and Pratt drained a 3-pointer



Junior Dyllon Pratt erupted for 20 points in Shawsheen's win on Saturday.
(Doug Hastings photo)

just before the break, making it a three-point game (21-18) at the end of the first half.

Moron opened the third quarter with a 3-pointer to tie the score and the teams were tied three more times, the last time at 30-30 when Breen completed a three-point play after a nice inbounds pass from Moron.

Pratt hit another 3-pointer in the quarter and had some important defensive plays, combining with Poirier to force two turnovers as a Reggie player stepped out of bounds trying to make a pass and then a backcourt violation.

"That's our identity," Gore said. "When we lock in and just stay disciplined on defense, we can play with the best of them. And that's what he did, we stayed disciplined, we contested every shot and stuck to our game plan. And these guys executed."

Greater Lawrence took a

32-30 lead before one of the prettiest buckets of the night, a flawless pick and roll that saw Moron hit Breen with a terrific pass inside and Breen ended up with a three-point play.

Moron knocked down a 3-pointer on the next possession for a 36-32 Ram lead and Shawsheen never gave it up.

Up 36-34 after three quarters, the Rams pushed the lead to five, 43-38, behind more good stuff from Pratt, who hit a 3-pointer, banked home a 16-foot jumper and then forced a Reggie player to travel with more hustling defense.

Greater Lawrence called a timeout with 5:26 to go and Lopes hit a 3-pointer right out of the break to make it 43-41.

Shawsheen's big run, its state championship-clinching run, would follow moments later.

While a 22-point fourth quarter fueled the Rams in the title game, it was

defense that did the trick in the semifinals.

The Rams beat Bay Path by a 37-35 score, allowing only 11 second-half points, three in the third quarter.

Three-pointers by Pratt and Moron and a Breen layup had Shawsheen in front 12-6 to start the game, but Bay Path didn't quit.

Down 12-9 after one quarter, the visitors were down 19-12 after Jevon Moron's 3-pointer before a 12-0 run changed the game.

Peter Barbale had eight points in the surge as Bay Path went into halftime with a 24-21 lead.

Senior Ryan Kelly gave the Rams a boost in the second quarter with some hustle plays off the bench. Kelly missed a 3-pointer just before halftime, tracked down the offensive rebound and then went to the floor to earn a jump ball. The play didn't result in points, but certainly gave the Rams some energy going into the locker room.

The Rams didn't allow a basket in the third quarter as Bay Path's three points were on foul shots by Barbale, who led all scorers with 25 points.

With Shawsheen down 24-22, Kelly made a steal and then tracked down another offensive rebound, eventually setting up Breen for a trip to the foul line.

A layup by freshman D'sean Moron, an inside hoop by Franck Moron and a layup by Pratt put the Rams up after three quarters, 29-27.

Breen and Kelly had two baskets each for Shawsheen in the fourth quarter, helping hold off Bay Path.

Barbale hit two fourth-quarter threes for Bay Path, but hoisted up another with time winding down and missed the shot, Breen and Franck Moron led Shawsheen with 13 and 11 points, respectively, while Pratt and Jevon Moron each added five.

The Rams are likely to open state tournament play on Friday at 6 p.m. against either Norton and Worcester Voke.



Senior Ryan Kelley runs the floor for the Rams.
(Doug Hastings photo)



Nate Smith lines up a foul shot.
(Doug Hastings photo)

Lifestyle

Ditch the drive for five Boston day trips

The \$10 MBTA weekend pass is an affordable and hassle-free way to get into Boston. Grab your sneakers and ditch the drive with five easy walking day trips in the city.

(Rosalyn Impink photo)

By ROSALYN IMPINK
News Correspondent

Downtown Boston may seem far away to suburbanites, but the MBTA Commuter Rail makes for a hassle-free and affordable way to get into the city without the daunting drive. The "purple line" train gets to North Station in under 40 minutes, on par with driving — plus, it eliminates the need to navigate narrow city streets, fight for parking or monitor a meter.

Best of all, you're set up for a day of adventure — if you can walk or roll a mile or two, much of Boston is quickly accessible from North Station on foot.

The MBTA weekend pass is \$10 for unlimited rides Saturday through Sunday (and some holidays) on the commuter rail, beating the \$16-20 round trip ticket depending on your station of origin. The Lowell line runs a consistent schedule

directly to North Station.

For North Tewksbury residents, North Billerica station is closest, while South Tewksbury and most Wilmington residents will find Wilmington station more accessible; the Anderson station in Woburn is also an option.

On the Haverhill line, stops are available at North Wilmington station and Ballardvale in Andover. Children aged 11 and under ride the train for free.

Once you reach North Station, dozens of Boston sites and activities are just steps away. But before you depart, make sure to check out the new Bruins statue in Portal Park where the Zakim Bridge meets the O'Neill Tunnel — the legendary Boston hockey team recently celebrated its centennial anniversary, and the six-foot-tall bronze bear sculpture is sure to be a hit with fans young and old.

From here, it's a quick

walk to access the historic North End for classic Italian food. Whether you're looking for authentic pizza, pasta or pastries, there are plenty of new and old favorites to enjoy "la dolce vita."

Keep an eye on the street as you walk — you're sure to quickly notice the red bricks of the Freedom Trail; this 2.5 mile trail is a fitting activity as we come up on the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution.

Follow the path north across the Charlestown Bridge — recently renamed in honor of the late Celtics legend Bill Russell — to get to the Bunker Hill Monument.

This granite obelisk (actually on Breed's Hill) is managed by the National Park Service and invites visitors to climb its nearly 300 steps for excellent city views; an accompanying museum tells the story of one of the Revolution's first major battles.

Down the street is the

Charlestown Navy Yard, home to the USS Constitution and its museum; the Constitution is the oldest commissioned naval ship afloat in the world, nearing her 230th birthday.

This highly interactive museum is great for kids and contextualizes Boston's rich maritime history.

Taking the trail east from North Station will bring you to several spots tied to Paul Revere. The Boston silversmith was born in the North End — be sure to stop at the Old North Church where Revere started his midnight ride, and visit the bronze statue of Revere on horseback before making your way to the Paul Revere House to explore exhibits on Revere's life (tickets are affordable but hours are limited).

If you're looking to learn more about the Revolution, Faneuil Hall and Quincy Market have plenty of history to explore right

down the street.

Foodies will be familiar with Boston Public Market, a year-round indoor marketplace featuring New England sourced food and products. It's a great place to get lunch or a snack, and allows everyone in your group to mix-and-match across the vendor stalls.

From here, it's easy to access the Rose Kennedy Greenway, a 1.5 mile park stretching from the North End to Chinatown. Walking the Greenway makes for a great adventure for families to engage with public art, enjoy open space and explore Boston at their own pace.

Once you've completed your roundtrip, it's just a short walk back to North Station.

To explore the west side of downtown, head south from North Station and make your way to the Black Heritage Trail of Boston; this self-guided 1.6

mile tour includes a free National Park Service audio guide to explore the sites of Beacon Hill's African-American community in the 1800s, taking you to historic homes and meeting houses that played a pivotal role in the abolishment of slavery.

Many properties are private, but the Museum of African American History is open to the public. Keep going south to access Boston Common and the Public Garden, which are the oldest public park and first public botanical garden in America, respectively. These iconic open spaces are a joy to visit at any time of year.

Ditch the car and let someone else do the driving — take the train into Boston and get exploring!

Up-to-date rail information is available at www.mbt.com, and National Park Service information is online at www.nps.gov.



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HONDA

OBITUARIES

Alton L. Durost

Drafted into Army during Vietnam War

Alton L. Durost Jr., age 72, of Jaffrey, NH, died peacefully at home surrounded by his family on Feb. 21, 2025. Al was born on Dec. 5, 1951 in Hartland, ME.

He was the dear son of the late Alton L. "Curly" Durost Sr., and the late Kathleen "Kay" Durost who were happily married for 65 years.

Al met the love of his life, Helen M. Fields, and the two were married on May 2, 1969.

He was drafted into the Army in January 1971 and honorably discharged in January 1977.

Al spent many years as a truck driver, better known to his co-workers as "Big Al." After the passing of his late wife in 2016, he retired a widow and settled in Jaffrey, NH residing with his son Paul aka "Roy" and their rambunctious dog Ruby (Al loved and spoiled Ruby despite always claiming he never

wanted a dog).

Al will always be remembered for being a vivacious character, full of life and spunk, always teasing and joking around, sarcastic and stubborn as they come right through his final hours.

He loved coffee, lottery tickets, ham sandwiches, and taking the family out for Chinese food. And more than anything, he adored cooking Sunday dinners with his wife and gathering around the table with his children and grandchildren.

Al was the beloved husband of the late Helen M. Durost, devoted father of Alton Durost III of Merrimack, Karen Pellegrino of Merrimack, Paul Durost of Jaffrey, and Stacey Durost-Sullivan and her husband Shawn Sullivan of Maine, loving "Grampy" of Ethan Durost and his wife Courtney, Zandra Morris, Travis Morris, Dallas Williams, Ruby, "adoptive Grampy" of Allie Vaillancourt, and beloved neph-



ew of his late Aunt Cheryl DuPlessis and her late husband Robert "Uncle Dolly" DuPlessis.

Al was loving brother of the late Robert "Scooby" Durost and his wife Roberta Ferrari of Billerica, William "Billy" Durost and his wife Lucille of Tewksbury, Carl Durost and his wife Jeanne of Wilmington, Kathy Roberge and her late husband Daniel Roberge of Stark, NH, and beloved "Uncle Al" to many nieces and nephews.

There will be no public services at this time.

Dorothy M. 'Dot' 'Doda' (Wedge) McGrath

Waitress for many years at Rocco's

Dorothy M. (Wedge) McGrath, fondly known as "Dot" or "Doda", age 92, a long-time resident of Wilmington, passed away on Feb. 22, 2025, at the Winchester Hospital, surrounded by her family.

Dot was born in Malden on Oct. 23, 1932; she was the dear daughter of the late George and Lillian (Mayo) Wedge. Dot was part of a large and loving family; she was raised and educated in Somerville, and a graduate of Somerville High School.

Dot married "her sweetheart" Edward McGrath on Oct. 25, 1953, in Somerville; the couple shared over 60 years of marriage and raised a beautiful family before Ed's passing in October of 2013.

Dot and Ed were truly a wonderful couple that did everything together and treasured the time they spent with family and friends throughout the years.

Dot and Ed moved to Wilmington in 1958 where they were welcomed by great neighbors and made some wonderful new friends who were considered extended family.

Dot was a wonderful homemaker and hostess; her door was always open, and she was always willing to help anyone in need. Dot loved to cook and bake; she looked forward to preparing and hosting family cookouts and countless holidays where everyone was welcome.

Dot also had a green thumb and enjoyed creating beautiful gardens around her yard.

Dot's family was her priority, and she showered them with unconditional love and devotion. Dot loved being a mom to Cheryl and Brian; whom she was a wonderful mentor, their best friend, and their biggest cheerleader no matter what they were involved in.

Dot looked forward to becoming a "Nana" to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren; she adored them and spoiled them every chance she got.

Dot enjoyed spending summers with her husband, children, and in-laws on Cape Cod; she loved swimming with the kids, sitting on the beach, and taking in the sun.

Dot was employed as a waitress for many years at Rocco's Restaurant in Wilmington; her endearing personality, work ethic, and great people skills made her a favorite to her customers, co-workers, and bosses.

Dot was always willing to give of her time and tal-

ents as she helped with countless fund raisers at the Knights of Columbus with her husband Ed. Dot and Ed had many friends at the Knights and enjoyed their family outings with "the gang."

In their early years, Dot and Ed looked forward to Saturday night card games and socializing with their siblings, in-laws, and friends; whist was always a favorite game.

They also loved to square dance with their friends and were members of the Wilmington Skirts and Flirts Club for many years.

In her spare time, Dot would often be found walking all over town with her sister Barbie; they were like "two peas in a pod." Dot also enjoyed time spent at the Wilmington Senior Center and was often involved in their many activities and trips; she especially loved the exercise classes at the center.

Dot was an avid reader and could often be found at the Wilmington Memorial Library; she was very knowledgeable and well read, which gave her the upper hand with the answers as she faithfully watched Wheel of Fortune or Jeopardy.

She loved her following her Boston sports teams, especially the New England Patriots and she could be found yelling advice to Tom Brady through the television.

Dot loved to travel with her family, friends, and most of all her sisters; they would head to Florida or Arizona for Red Sox practice games and spring training, or clear across the country to California. They make it abroad several times, some of their favorite trips were to Italy not to mention their many cruises all over the world.

Dot enjoyed experiencing new places and meeting new people; she always had a great time no matter where she traveled.

Dot was a woman of great faith; a true believer in God and the power of prayer. Dot was a faithful parishioner of St. Thomas of Villanova Church; she looked forward to attending Mass even attending the week before her passing.

Dot's faith helped her through many of life's challenges and she often prayed for others who needed help as well.

Dot will be fondly remembered as a beautiful lady inside and out, had a heart of gold, and was very kind towards everyone she met. Dot will for-



ever be loved and missed by all who knew her.

Dot was the beloved wife of the late Edward J. McGrath, devoted mother of Cheryl Fahey and her husband Jack and Brian McGrath and his wife Carole all of Wilmington, loving "Nana" of Shannon Fahey Merrifield and her husband Justin of North Andover, Ryan Fahey of Wilmington, Andrew McGrath of Burlington, Bill McGrath and his wife Megan and Matt McGrath and his wife Bethany all of New Hampshire, and great-grandchildren John, Jacob, Eliza, Emma, Bryce, and Colton.

Dear sister of Marion Kelley and her late husband Henry of California, Richard Wedge and his wife Louise of Billerica, Carol Tiberii and her late companion Phillip Flammia of New Hampshire, the late Paul Wedge and his late wife Maureen, the late George Wedge and his late wife Mary, the late Walter Wedge, the late Robert Wedge and his late wife Joan, the late Barbara Hayward and her late husband Jack, sister-in-law of the late Richard McGrath and his late wife Ruth, the late Nora McGrath and the late Eleanor Bohan and her late husband Lawrence.

Dot is further survived by many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Family and friends will gather for Visitation at the Nichols Funeral Home, 187 Middlesex Ave. (Rt. 62), Wilmington, on Sunday, March 2 from 4 - 7 p.m. All are welcome to gather at the Funeral Home on Monday, March 3 at 9:30 a.m. followed by a Funeral Mass at 10:30 a.m. in St. Thomas of Villanova Church, 126 Middlesex Ave., Wilmington.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Dorothy's memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 320 Nevada St. #201, Newton, MA 02460.

To leave a message of condolence for the family please visit our website at www.nicholsfuneralhome.com

Upcoming local events

Now-March 16, Belle of the Ball dress collection. Donate a dress or in other ways to provide prom dresses to help junior and senior girls feel great about themselves and enjoy their special school celebrations. Visit antons.com/belle for details. Local partners include Antons Cleaners, Jordans Furniture, and Enterprise Bank.

February 27, Tewksbury Indoor Community Market, 175 Chandler St. from 4 - 7 p.m. Visit the Tewksbury Senior Center and enjoy a winter market. Food vendors, artisans and community groups. Visit tewksburymarket.com for more details.

March 1, New England Woodcarvers, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Drop in anytime at St. Thomas Church. Bring a lunch or \$7 for pizza. Three workshops offered.

March 2, Tewksbury Masonic Lodge Blood Drive, 70 Victor Drive, Tewksbury, 8 a.m., visit redcrossblood.org to schedule a time.

March 3, Public Health Museum Virtual Book Club, Rough Sleepers 7 p.m. on Zoom. Visit publichealthmuseum.org to register.

March 8, Dr. Sandy Creamer Johnson Foundation Annual Fundraiser, 1 - 5 p.m., Tewksbury/Wilmington Elks, 777 South St. Monies raised for scholarships.

March 11 - April 15, 2025, Tewksbury Public Library, 6:15 to 6:45 p.m. NAMI Basics (National Alliance on Mental Illness Massachusetts) Free course for parents and family caregivers of children and adolescents with emotional or behavioral issues. Meets weekly on Tuesdays. Contact teachers: Dee at dee.febba@comcast.net or Brian at brian.sarr19@gmail.com

March 14, Trivia and Tunes at the Tewksbury Senior Center. Bring your friends or join a group for this fun music trivia from 1 - 3 p.m. Light refreshments served or bring your own. Call the Senior Center with questions at: (978) 640-4480 and to reserve your spot.

March 22, Book Donation Drive 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Friends of the Tewksbury Public Library. Books will be checked for saleable conditions to be sold on the Friends' Honor Cart. All proceeds are used for library programming

March 24, Eat-In/Take Out for the Friends of the Library at Vic's Waffle House, 283 Old Main St. in Tewksbury. Come eat breakfast for dinner from 4-7 p.m.! Vic's will be open exclusively for the Friends fund raiser. There will be a 50/50 raffle with proceeds funding the programming at the library.

September 13, 2025 — Wilmington High School

Class of 1975 50th reunion, live band, dancing, buffet dinner, cash bar. Pay by April 1 — \$85, April 2 - July 1 — \$90, July 2 through last minute walk-ins — \$95. Register and pay at: <https://my.cheddarup.com/c/high-school-class-reunion-temp-65333/items?cart> Questions? Steve Brander skbrander@gmail.com Reunion Organizers: Steve Brander / Vin Scifo / Helen Ryba

Thursdays, Saturdays, and the first Sunday of the month, Public Health Museum, 365 East St., Open for indoor and campus tours. Check website for times. Publichealthmuseum.org

Book Store Next Door, Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. The Book Store is staffed by volunteers from the Friends of the Wilmington Public Library. All proceeds support library programs. Next to Wilmington Public Library.

Sundays, Lowell Streetcar Museum, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., Adults \$3, seniors and youth age 3-12 \$2, children under 3 are free. Cash only. 25 Shattuck St., Lowell.

Wilmington Town Museum, Mondays and Tuesdays, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Harnden Tavern, 430 Salem St. (Rt. 62), Wilmington

Middlesex Canal Museum, Saturdays and Sundays, Noon - 4PM, 71 Faulkner St., North Billerica

Local residents named to Dean's List at Wentworth Institute of Technology

BOSTON — The following local students have made the dean's list at Wentworth Institute of Technology for the fall 2024 semester.

- Elijah Sainato of Wilmington
- Kenneth Sullivan of Wilmington
- Elliot Gorham of Wilmington
- Aurora Harper of Wilmington
- Klara Schuler of Wilmington

• Nicholas Cox of Wilmington

Wentworth Institute of Technology

Founded in 1904, Wentworth Institute of Technology provides a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, project-based education in architecture and design, computing and data science, engineering, management, and sciences and humanities that integrates classroom, laboratory, studio, cooperative

and experiential learning to develop career-ready, skilled professionals, and engaged citizens.

The University of Opportunity, Wentworth aims to be a student-centered institution that offers high-quality undergraduate, graduate, and life-long learning programs, and embraces a culture of innovation and creativity. Hands-on. Future-Ready. Education that's worth it. Wentworth.

Elkins named to Dean's List at Salve Regina University

NEWPORT, RI — Aidan Elkins of Wilmington was named to the Dean's List during the fall 2024 academic semester at Salve Regina University. To qualify for the Dean's List, students must earn a semester grade point average of 3.6 for full-time students completing at least 12 graded credits, or a semester grade point average of 3.8 for part-time students completing at least six credits.

Salve Regina University is a Catholic, coeducational institution of higher education found-

ed by the Sisters of Mercy in 1947. For more than 75 years, Salve has offered rigorous, innovative academic programming in the liberal arts tradition that prepares students to be global citizens and lifelong learners.

More than 2,700 undergraduate and graduate students from around the world are enrolled at Salve in 48 undergraduate majors, nine master's degree programs, combined bachelor's/master's programs, and doctoral programs.

Every undergraduate

student engages in Salve Compass, a four-year transformational program through which they develop the experience, skills, and wisdom required for a fulfilling career and to make a positive difference in the world.

The University is also home to the Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy, a multi-disciplinary research center focused on the intersection of politics, policy, and ideas.

For more information visit salve.edu.

Friends of the Library to hold two events in March

TEWKSBURY — The Friends of the Library will hold two events in March.

One is an eat-in or take-out fundraiser at Vic's Waffle House, 283 Old Main St. in Tewksbury. It will be held on Monday, March 24 from 4 - 7 p.m.

Come eat breakfast for dinner! Vic's will be open exclusively for the Friends fund riser. There will be a 50/50 raffle with proceeds funding the programming at the library.

The Friends of the Library will also be holding

a Book Donation Drive on Saturday, March 22 from 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at the Tewksbury Public Library.

Books will be checked for saleable conditions to be sold on the Friends' Honor Cart. All proceeds are used for library programming.

ALL INCLUSIVE OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE

Large second-floor office space in the heart of Wilmington with easy access to The Commuter Rail and minutes from all major highways. This space would be ideal for a lawyer or a tax professional.



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LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURTMIDDLESEX, SS:
PROBATE & FAMILY COURT
DOCKET NO. MI25E0006PP

To:
Simone Roy of Tewksbury, MA,
James McGilvery of Tewksbury,
MA and to all other persons in-
terested.

A petition has been presented to said Court by, Simone Roy representing that they hold as a Joint Tenant in an undivided part or share of certain land lying in Tewksbury in the County of Middlesex, and briefly described as

33 Grasshopper Lane,
Tewksbury, MA 01876

The following described real estate property situate in the City of Tewksbury, County of Middlesex and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to wit:

Being shown as Lot 40, Grasshopper Lane, as shown on a plan entitled, "Sub-Division Plan of Chandler Street Acres, Tewksbury, Massachusetts, dated December 22, 1953, Dana F. Perkins & Sons, Inc. surveyors, recorded with Middlesex North District Deeds, Book of Plans 84 and bounded and described as follows:

Westerly by Grasshopper Lane, one hundred (100) feet;

Northerly by Lot 41, as shown on said plan, one hundred nineteen and 24/100 (119.24) feet;

Easterly by parts of Lots 35 and 36, one hundred and 66/100 (100.66) feet; and

Southerly by Lot 39, as shown on said plan, one hundred seven and 74/100 (107.74) Feet.

Containing 11,349 +/- feet of land according to said plan, more or less.

Property Address: 33 Grasshopper Lane, Tewksbury, MA 01876

For title see Deed dated January 5, 1967 and recorded with Middlesex North Registry of Deeds at Book 1781, Page 448.

Setting forth that the petitioner desires that all said land may be ordered to be sold at a private or public sale for not less than (\$545,000.00) FIVE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS, and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end, the commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to make sale and conveyance of all, or any portion of said land which the Court finds cannot be advantageously divided, either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute and pay over the net proceeds thereof in such a manner as to make the partition just and equal.

If you desire to object thereto you or your attorney should file a written appearance and answer in said Court at Lowell before ten o'clock on the 16th Day of April 2025 the return date of this citation.

Witness, Honorable Terri Klug-Cafazzo, First Justice of this Court, this 19th day of February in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Five.

Tara E. DeCristofaro,
Register Of Probate
250184 2/27/25

LEGAL NOTICES ARCHIVE

All published legal notices are posted to the Massachusetts Public Notices website. To search the archive of previously published legal notices go to:

www.homenewshere.com or
masspublicnotices.org/Search.aspx

LEGAL NOTICE

TOWN OF WILMINGTON
BOARD OF APPEALS

A public hearing will be held at the Town Hall, 121 Glen Road, Room 9 on Wednesday, March 12th, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. on the following applications:

CASE #3-25
95 MINK RUN ROAD
MAP 11 PARCEL 61C

APPLICANT: NIRAV PATEL

REQUEST: VARIANCE FOR A FAMILY ROOM 20X22, SECTION 5.3.1 NO STRUCTURE SHALL BE CONSTRUCTED WITHIN THE SETBACK. THE ADDITION WILL BE 14.74 FEET FROM LOT LINE IN A R 20 ZONE

250152 2/27, 3/6/25

LEGAL NOTICE

TOWN OF WILMINGTON
PLANNING BOARD

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 5, the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Auditorium at 121 Glen Road, Wilmington, MA on the Zoning Articles proposed for inclusion on the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting to be held May 3, 2025. The Public Hearing will be conducted jointly with the Finance Committee.

The following summarizes the Zoning Articles that will be considered at the Public Hearing:

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw and associated Zoning Map of the Town of Wilmington by creating a new Section 6.12 for the MBTA Communities Multi-family Overlay District (MOD) with four Sub-districts (Main Street Mixed Use Sub-district, Burlington Avenue Sub-district, Deming Way Sub-district, and West Street Sub-district), or take any other action related thereto.

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw by deleting Section 6.11 Inclusionary Housing in its entirety, and replacing it with a new Section 6.11 Inclusionary Housing, or to take any other action related thereto.

The Zoning Articles and maps may be inspected by contacting the Department of Planning & Conservation at 978-658-8238 Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Articles may also be found on the Town website. Wilmington Planning Board

Terence Boland, Chair
Wilmington Planning Board
250186 2/27, 3/6/25

LEGAL NOTICE

TOWN OF TEWKSBURY
PLANNING BOARD

PUBLIC HEARING

SPECIAL PERMIT
SITE PLAN REVIEW,
LAND DISTURBANCE PERMIT

Notice is hereby given that the Tewksbury Planning Board will hold a public hearing on March 10, 2025 at 7:05 PM in the Tewksbury Town Hall, 1009 Main Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876 on an application filed by David Plunkett on behalf of BLJB Holdings, LLC for a Site Plan Review pursuant to Section 3.6 and Special Permit under Section 3.5 of the Tewksbury Zoning Bylaw, as well as a Land Disturbance Permit pursuant to Chapter 19 of the General Bylaw to construct three residential buildings as multifamily dwellings for persons aged 55or older as shown on plans filed with this Board.

Said property is located at 15 & 41 Astle Street, Assessor's Map 22, Lots 11 & 9, zoned General Business.

The application may be examined on the Planning Board webpage of the Town of Tewksbury's website at www.tewksbury-ma.gov. Should other accommodations be necessary to view the application, please call the Community Development Office at 978-640-4370. Legal Notice can also be viewed on www.masspublicnotices.org

Stephen Johnson, Chairman
250132 2/20, 2/27/25

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to: Mario Tarves of, 428 Ridge St., Apt.1 in Fall River MA who is the last registered owner of a

2012 Nissan Juke

VIN # JN8AF5MVXCT110616 that this vehicle will be sold at auction on or about March 7, 2025 at A&S Towing, 222 Andover Street, Wilmington MA. The vehicle will be auctioned to recover towing and storage charges that are past due.

250133 2/12, 19, 26/25

LEGAL NOTICE

TOWN OF WILMINGTON
PLANNING BOARD

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 5, the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Auditorium at 121 Glen Road, Wilmington, MA on the Zoning Articles proposed for inclusion on the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting to be held May 3, 2025. The Public Hearing will be conducted jointly with the Finance Committee.

The following summarizes the Zoning Articles that will be considered at the Public Hearing:

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning By-law by deleting the current Flood Plain District Section 6.2 in its entirety and replacing it with a new section 6.2; or to take any other action related thereto.

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning By-law by deleting the current Accessory Apartments Section 4.2 in its entirety and replacing it with a new section 4.2; or to take any other action related thereto.

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Zoning Bylaw to prohibit short term rentals in all zoning districts or take any other action related thereto.

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw and associated Zoning Map of the Town of Wilmington by voting to rezone from Residence 20 (R20) to General Business (GB) the parcel of land shown on Assessor's Map 42, Parcel 53, or to take any other action related thereto.

The Zoning Articles and maps may be inspected by contacting the Department of Planning & Conservation at 978-658-8238 Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Articles may also be found on the Town website. Terence Boland, Chair
Wilmington Planning Board
250185 2/27, 3/6/25

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

MIDDLESEX DIVISION

INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE

Docket No. MI24P5472EA
Estate of: John J. Sipowicz
Date of Death:
August 19, 2024

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Anna H. Ruggiero of Sharon MA

Anna H. Ruggiero of Sharon MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve Without surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.

250179 02/27/25

Holt & Bugbee celebrates 200 years of excellence

TEWKSBURY — Holt & Bugbee, one of America's oldest and most trusted lumber companies, is proud to announce its 200th anniversary celebration in 2025. Under the banner "A Legacy of Excellence Since 1825," the company will honor its bicentennial by spotlighting its enduring influence on the lumber industry, its reputation for uncompromising quality, and its commitment to customers, employees, and partners.

Founded in 1825, Holt & Bugbee has a long history of manufacturing and distributing premium hardwood and softwood lumber, sourced domestically and internationally.

Over two centuries, the company has grown from a small New England business to a leader in the industry, renowned for its craftsmanship, consistency, and dedication to sustainable practices.

Commemorating Two Centuries of Craftsmanship and Innovation

To celebrate this milestone, Holt & Bugbee will host a series of initiatives throughout 2025 aimed at engaging its community of customers, partners, and employees. The campaign will also focus on enhancing public awareness of the company's long-standing contributions to the lumber industry and its enduring legacy of quality.

"Our 200th anniversary is a unique moment to reflect on Holt & Bugbee's legacy and the impact we've had on the industry," said Ben Pierce, Manager at Holt & Bugbee Foundation. "Since 1825, we have been dedicated to delivering the highest-quality lumber products and building strong, trusted relationships with our clients. As we look to the future, we are committed to upholding the same standards that

have carried us through two centuries of success."

A Legacy of Excellence That Extends Beyond Products

Through a curated historical exhibit, special commemorative content, and engagement with local communities and industry leaders, Holt & Bugbee aims to inspire the next generation of woodworkers, craftspeople, and designers. By sharing its rich history, the company hopes to reinforce its role as a staple of excellence in the lumber industry and attract new customers who value high-quality materials and expertise.

Join Us in Celebrating 200 Years of Holt & Bugbee

In addition to the initiatives planned, Holt & Bugbee will celebrate its 200th anniversary on May 7, 2025 at their location in Tewksbury. Industry partners, customers and employees will be invited to attend this momentous occasion to celebrate the organization's long standing impact on the industry. This event will allow customers and partners to join Holt & Bugbee in reflecting on its past and looking toward the future.

To learn more about Holt & Bugbee 200th anniversary events, legacy, and products, visit holtandbugbee.com.

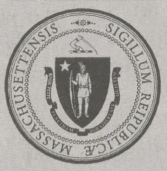
About

Holt & Bugbee

Holt & Bugbee, founded in 1825 and based in Tewksbury, is a leading provider of high-quality domestic and imported hardwood and softwood lumber. With a commitment to excellence and sustainability, Holt & Bugbee has served retail lumber yards, designers, and architects for nearly two centuries.

For more information, visit holtandbugbee.com.

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

Middlesex Probate and Family Court
10-U Commerce Way
Woburn, MA 01801
(781) 865-4000

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

Docket No. MI25P0769EA

Estate of: Judith A. Blum
Also known as:
Judith Amy Blum
Date of Death: 01/07/2025

To all interested persons:

A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Andrew Blum of Wilmington MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: Andrew Blum of Wilmington MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/18/2025.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Terri L. Klug Cafazzo, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 18, 2025
Tara E. DeCristofaro,
Register of Probate

250174 2/27/25

LEGAL NOTICE



TOWN OF TEWKSBURY

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
ROADWAY RESURFACING
CONTRACT PW-25-07

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed Bids for TOWN OF TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS ROADWAY RESURFACING CONTRACT PW-25-07, will be received by the Town of Tewksbury at the Department of Public Works office, 999 Whipple Road, Tewksbury, MA 01876, until 1:00 p.m., on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at that time and place Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud. In the event the DPW offices are closed due to inclement weather, the bid opening will be postponed until the next day the DPW offices are open.

The total contract price of this contract shall consist of furnishing all labor, tools, equipment and materials necessary for the complete and satisfactory performance as determined in the sole discretion of the Town.

A MassDOT pre-qualification certificate of approval will be required to bid on the Contract. Contract Documents are available after 1:00 p.m. local time on Wednesday, February 19, 2025 by going to www.accentblueprints.com and following the prompts to a free downloadable bid set. Contact Accent Printing at 978-362-8038 for distribution questions. No monetary deposit is required to obtain the documents. Contract Documents may also be examined, but not obtained, at the DPW office during the following hours: 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Each Bid shall be submitted in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders and shall be accompanied by a Bid Security in form of a certified check, cashier's check or security bond in the amount of 5 percent of the Bid.

This contract has been written in conformance with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS FOR HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES 2024 Edition. Additional supplemental specifications have been added where applicable and will govern in the contract.

Bidders may not withdraw their Bids for a period of 45 days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays, after the actual date of the opening of the Bids. Complete instructions for filing Bids are included in the Instructions to Bidders.

Minimum Wage Rates as determined by the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development under the provision of the M.G.L. c.149, §26 to 27D, as amended, apply to this project. It is the responsibility of the Contractor, before Bid Opening to request, if necessary, any additional information on Minimum Wage Rates for those trades' people who may be employed for the proposed work under this Contract.

The Bidding and Award of this Contract will be pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30, § 39M. The Owner reserves the right, in its absolute and sole discretion, to waive any informality in or to reject any or all Bids if deemed to be in its best interest.

MassDOT prequalification of contractors with the class of work as, Pavement - Surfacing, for the project with an estimated value of \$1,065,525.00 will be required.

JOHN CURRAN
TOWN MANAGER
TEWKSBURY,
MASSACHUSETTS

250151 2/20/25

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

Middlesex Probate and Family Court
10-U Commerce Way
Woburn, MA 01801
(781) 865-4000

CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

Docket No. MI25C0268CA

In the matter of:
Ruffa Mae Flores Bain

A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by Ruffa Mae Flores Bain of Tewksbury MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree changing their name to: Ruffa Mae Flores Bain

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Middlesex Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/20/2025.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Terri L. Klug Cafazzo, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 20, 2025
Tara E. DeCristofaro,
Register of Probate

250187 2/27/25

LEGAL NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT

Middlesex Probate and Family Court
10-U Commerce Way
Woburn, MA 01801
(781) 865-4000

CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

In the matter of:
Dominic Christopher Cohen

A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by Dominic Christopher Cohen of Tewksbury MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree changing their name to: Kit Vivian Zephira

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Middlesex Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/19/2025.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Terri L. Klug Cafazzo, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 19, 2025
Tara E. DeCristofaro,
Register of Probate

250191 2/27/25

Two graduation pathways

SCHOOL FROM PAGE 1

cy decision through MCAS scores, establish pathways to earn the competency determination based on local requirements, establish a framework for students who would have graduated between 2003 and 2024 who could now earn their diplomas thanks to the updates, and include language accounting for potential changes.

Elliott described that the subcommittee considered this issue from multiple lenses and areas of specialty and considered students who are placed out of district. She said that their discussion was thoughtful.

The recommendation from the aforementioned subcommittee was to have two distinct graduation pathways: competency determination requirements and graduation requirements. They did not yet have a draft policy for the committee to review as they were thinking through some specific scenarios still.

The subcommittee further recommended that the WPS graduation requirements policy be revised to align with the new credit hour and course requirements due to the high school schedule change. They also wanted to see the policy mention meeting district competency requirements and either state the competency determination requirements therein or in a separate policy.

She went on to explain that competency decisions are not high school graduation requirements but based on academic standards and curriculum frameworks and coursework for 10th grade. She also said that MCAS would still be administered and tied to accountability ratings and eligibility for scholarships although it won't be the basis of any competency determinations.

Some of the elements of the new competency determination would be re-

ceiving a passing grade in Biology, Chemistry, or Physics, or an equivalent course and a passing grade in both Algebra I and Geometry.

Nicholas Golden asked if you could meet the graduation requirements without passing the competency determination requirements. Elliott confirmed that the graduation requirements would be more rigorous, and meeting those passes the competency determination.

David Ragsdale asked if they had considered requiring a certain grade in these classes rather than simply passing the class. Elliott replied that they had discussed this suggestion but they wanted to be fair and equitable especially as they're increasing the rigor and expectations of coursework at the high school.

Stephen Turner wondered how often they would review this standard. Elliott answered that they would review every other year, probably sooner at first.

Ragsdale referenced that passing MCAS scores are 55 percent in English/Language Arts, 38 percent in Mathematics, 30 percent in Biology, and 28 percent in Physics.

He suggested that this ballot question passing would lead to lower MCAS test grades overall and less preparation in the classroom for passing MCAS.

Jay Samaha also posited that students might take the MCAS tests less seriously now that they don't need to pass in order to graduate.

Dr. Mike Mercaldi wondered how they could reward students who do well on MCAS as opposed to punishing them for failing.

There was no action for the committee to take that night, although they acknowledged that their Policy Subcommittee would work on the competency determination and graduation requirements policies.

Gas delivery charges catch everyone's eye

HEAT FROM PAGE 1

reconciliation component that allows gas companies to recover costs that may have run higher than anticipated the prior year.

It is important to note that gas companies may not profit from the sale of gas.

But while residents understand the cost of gas and the implications of running their heat at 70 degrees vs. setting the thermostat much lower, it is the gas delivery charges that are catching everyone's attention.

The local distribution adjustment factor, or LDAF, according to the DPU and the utilities themselves, is a cost component to ensure the gas heating your home is provided safely while meeting legislative regulations, such as the costs for energy efficiency measures offered by your utility, and the costs to provide rate assistance to income eligible custom-

ers.

What that means is, the LDAF charge is covering the cost of discounts offered to those needing fuel assistance, and is paying for energy saving services such as home energy audits and the Mass Save program.

The Mass Save program requires utilities to pay rebates to customers for switching to electric heat among other services it provides. If you've ever had an energy audit, that's Mass Save. Some monies also go toward infrastructure costs such as pipeline improvements.

And while the utilities must earn enough to maintain their infrastructure and service, profits are also encapsulated in that charge.

So, what to do? There are a few avenues that rate payers can explore. First, visit <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-public-utilities> to view detailed information on

how the various charges are determined. There are programs that some rate payers may qualify for to spread the burden over several months, or receive the aforementioned discounts.

The DPU has also opened an Energy Burden Inquiry and is going to be investigating the utilities' methods for revenue recovery. For example, questions have been raised about the burden lying solely on the ratepayers or whether shareholders should share in that burden as well.

Development of new or restructured energy affordability programs that would extend to moderate income households is also part of the discussion. And an urgency to get relief sooner rather than later seems to be a priority, as well.

Governor Maura Healey sent a letter Sunday to Jamie Vaan Nostrand, chair of the Massachu-

setts Department of Public Utilities (DPU), saying, "The DPU must act immediately to provide rate relief to customers in this heating season."

Keep an eye on the DPU's events page at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-public-utilities/events?page=1> for opportunities to participate in and comment on the investigation.

Rate payers can also contact their legislators to share their concerns about the cost of energy. In Tewksbury and Wilmington, delegation contacts include, Senator Barry Finegold, Representative David Robertson, Representative Vanna Howard, and Representative Tram Nguyen.

At the federal level the delegation includes Senator Ed Markey, Senator Elizabeth Warren, and Representative Seth Moulton.

Select Board supports Eagle Scout project

By LIZZY HILL
News Correspondent

WILMINGTON — The Select Board agenda on Monday, Feb. 24 pertained to an Eagle Scout project, a letter of support for cable access legislation and other communications and requests.

10th grader Taylor Hirst brought a presentation to the board for his Eagle Scout project. Hirst explained his idea to install a monument to memorialize Wilmington's Gold Star families. He shared that he had met with the Veterans' Services Office to discuss his plans for this project.

He also learned in doing so that his own family is a Gold Star family, as his

cousin who served in Vietnam is missing in action. Hirst stated that this would memorialize those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice and allow a space for members of the community to pay their respects.

The projected cost between \$3,000 and \$4,000 would cover the purchase and installation of the stone, designing and coordinating the engraving, creating the base and a plaque on the back containing Hirst's name. Hirst mentioned that the Department of Public Works already purchased the stone and confirmed their ability to install it.

He would ask for donations to pay the cost, and anything extra would be

donated to the Veterans' Services Office. He hoped that the monument would be installed and dedicated by Memorial Day weekend.

Veterans' Services Director Lou Cimaglia highlighted that Hirst was able to adapt well for a new idea after his previous project didn't work out. He also added that the monument would be installed on the town common.

The board members congratulated Hirst and wished him the best.

Kevin Caira also thanked Cimaglia for his office's continued work to support veterans, their families and students in town.

Lilia Maselli said, "Being an Eagle Scout stays

with you for your entire life."

Frank West said that this is the only thing from his youth that Hirst could put on his resume.

Hirst's father, Keith Hirst, commented that he was also an Eagle Scout.

Town Manager Eric Slagle also said that he was impressed by the presentation. The board voted to endorse the proposed project.

In communications, Slagle wrote to the board proposing a tool be adopted to evaluate the town manager's performance. The board had yet to discuss feedback on the document, but Chair Greg Bendel asked them to con-

EAGLE | PAGE A8W

Samaha won't run for reelection

SCHOOL FROM PAGE 1

choosing the finalist over February break and announcing the result shortly afterward.

In subcommittee reports, Ragsdale mentioned that the Policy Subcommittee discussed the Title X Policy and Golden shared that the State Delegation Liaisons Subcommittee had an upcoming meeting with Senator Barry Finegold.

As Fennelly named up-

coming dates including April 26 being the annual town election, Samaha took a moment to explain that he chose not to run for re-election. He thanked his colleagues along with Dr. Brand, for their thoughtfulness, leadership, encouragement, level-headedness, knowledge, insight, preparedness, and approach to this work.

"We haven't always agreed but it's never prevented us from moving forward," he said. "We're in

this age where a lot of governing bodies are more concerned with grandstanding and causing division, and I think this committee has done the exact opposite of that and sought to find common ground for the greater good."

He shared his deep respect for the committee members and his support for them in the future.

Fennelly quickly added that Samaha's insight and contributions would be greatly missed.

Find-It Quick HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE

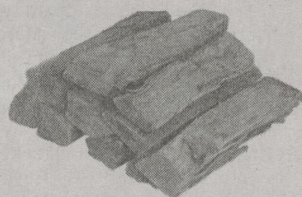
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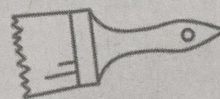
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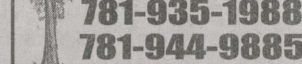
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WCTV forced to make cuts due to number of cable subscribers decreasing in town

EAGLE FROM PAGE A7W

sider it and vote at their March 10 meeting. They would aim to take up the evaluation at their first April meeting.

The other memo came from Xfinity, that two channels were ceasing operations: SporTV and Universal Kids.

The board later considered a letter of support for House Bill 326, "An Act to Modernize Funding for Community Media Programming." Bendel recalled that the board had written a letter of endorsement for a similar piece of legislation in 2017.

A representative of WCTV spoke up to explain that their current funding model was great when everyone had cable, but due to streaming services it doesn't work anymore. They'd seen funding drop 30 percent in the past five years and inflation raise costs by 40 percent.

He shared that WCTV has cut everything that they could — including staffing — and they continue to offer more services, but none of their employees can afford to live in town.

Without a different revenue stream, their other option was to create a

town telecommunications department. For reference, Tewksbury's department had an annual budget of \$800,000 and fewer programs than Wilmington currently offers.

What the legislation proposed was imposing a five percent tax on streaming services providers to be paid to the town. This would likely be passed off to the consumer and increase their cost for streaming services by an average of \$10.

Caira asked how this would assist WCTV. The WCTV representative explained that the cost to the streaming services providers would be given

to WCTV.

Slagle added that the town has an agreement with WCTV currently where they pass the five percent of revenue from cable companies to them, and this would require something similar from streaming services providers.

Caira also wondered how the town's state delegation feels about this legislation. They shared that Senator Barry Finegold didn't support it, but Representative Dave Robertson did.

The board voted to endorse the support letter.

They also approved the memorandum of under-

standing with AFSCME Local 1703 Unit 2 which involved adding some town positions and removing others from the union. This would also move forward adopting different hours at town hall for late nights on Tuesdays, to be open from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., and half days on Fridays from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Residents asked in public comments about where the new fire substation location would be — which Slagle said would be announced shortly — and if there were extra costs for the new town hall/school administration building. Caira invit-

ed anyone to attend that building committee's regular meetings.

Among announcements were the Harnden Tavern's 250th Anniversary celebration, the grand opening of the new senior center, and the retirement ceremony for Detective Pat Nally.

The Salute to Service that night honored US Airforce Veteran Thomas Walsh, who served from June 1964 to June 1968 and earned several medals. Bendel also mentioned that Walsh was the voice of the Wilmington Wildcats.

One article would approve street acceptances as previously approved by the Select Board

ARTICLES FROM PAGE 1

Lilia Maselli shared a similar sentiment.

Slagle then detailed the non-petitioned articles. He said that article one opens Town Meeting and article two invites reports from other committees. Article three was set aside for unpaid bills, but there were none at the moment. Article four would allow the town to establish agreements with various banks.

Article five is the budget article and article six follows the capital plan.

Article seven is for PEG Access funds to be transferred to WCTV. Articles eight and nine set aside money for the 4th of July, Memorial Day, and Veterans' Day ceremonies. Article 10 would renew the leases on clubhouses.

Article 11 establishes compost and subsurface sew-

age disposal accounts, and articles 13 and 14 set aside money for sewer and OPEB, respectively. Article 15 would transfer money for capital stabilization and article 18 would transfer funds between line items.

Articles 19 and 20 propose money for the Route 38 water main and Industrial Way pump station.

One new article would create a revolving fund in the amount of \$25,000 for the use of fields to mitigate the cost of overtime for the DPW field staff. Another fund proposed was for a new pension stabilization fund.

Slagle explained that the additional money paid toward the Middlesex Retirement Fund had saved the town money so far, but they also wanted to set aside a fund which would gain interest to be used to pay off the debt in full early.

Slagle also proposed an article to request authorization for the town to transfer land from the Board of Water Commission to be voted as surplus and combined with another acre of land as a new hopeful location for a north Wilmington fire substation.

Relatedly, other articles would propose easements to access the fire substation and purchase the railroad.

Article 24 proposed the street acceptances as previously approved by the board, and article 25 proposed amending town by-law to eliminate random draw.

Slagle recalled that all warrant articles come up in the order in which they are put in the warrant instead of being subject to unfortunate random draw as they were at the Dec. 7 special Town Meeting.

Article 26 would adopt increased fines for kennel violations. Article 27 proposed amendments to the water user regulation. Article 28 proposed new language to mirror the state law regarding accessory dwelling units, and article 31 would add language about short-term rentals.

Article 29 would amend the floodplain district. Article 30 would transfer some properties into the control of the Conservation Commission. Article 32 proposed the naming of a room at the new town hall to honor Dee Genetti. Article 33 proposed draft language on the demolition delay.

Kevin Caira stated his preference for random draw at Town Meeting to keep residents present at the meeting.

Slagle added that he discussed this with Town Mo-

derator Jonathan Eaton and he was in favor of the article.

Bendel mentioned that the board would confirm the warrant at their March 10 meeting, and they could discuss any questions or feedback during that meeting.

Gary DePalma asked about article 33, and Bendel suggested that the Historical Commission would be able to answer questions in this regard.

The board later set the date and time for a special Town Meeting on May 3 at 9 a.m. Slagle provided that they wanted to bring the MBTA zoning proposal back in a special Town Meeting at the same time as Town Meeting.

He also shared that the attorney general had the authority to compel towns to comply with the zoning regulations, and the town

now had until July to comply.

Slagle added that the state auditor determined that the MBTA zoning change did constitute an unfunded mandate. He already spoke with town counsel KP Law who was determining if this was a substantive issue.

Frank West asked that relevant information be brought to the meeting to inform residents.

The board approved the proposed date and time for the special Town Meeting.

They also voted to endorse the actions of the town manager regarding submitting an MBTA zoning action plan. Slagle explained that he submitted and requested endorsement afterward, as there wasn't time to request endorsement by the full board since the action plan was due on Feb. 13.



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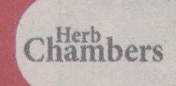
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